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## THE PHILOSOPHIC BASES OF ART AND CRITICISM<sup>1</sup>

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REFERENCE to philosophic principles in special or technical discussions to expose erroneous assumptions and to establish common grounds for judgments of fact or value could not be justified easily by the record of its success in producing agreement. Philosophers have frequently professed to have resolved philosophic disagreements by applying scientific principles to a subject matter for the first time or to have resolved doctrinal disagreements in particular fields of inquiry or action by discovering and expounding philosophic principles. Yet doctrinal differences seem to have persisted, after each such effort at resolution, translated into more inclusive and more obstinate philosophic oppositions, and the differences of philosophers seem to have been forgotten more frequently than they have been resolved. Long before the formulation of such convictions in present-day varieties of pragmatisms and positivisms, the practical man, the artist, the scientist, and the theologian expressed impatience with philosophic considerations because they were impertinent to operations considered urgent, or incompatible with attitudes defended as realistic, or inadequate for

ends assumed to be ultimate. The pragmatic impatience with theory and the positivistic exposure of "unreal" problems, however, even in their most abbreviated expressions, are philosophies; and the dialectical consequences of principles are particularly apparent, though unexamined, in those minimal philosophies which are expressions of conviction concerning the subject of an inquiry or concerning the method by which the inquiry must be pursued. For general principles, which may seem arbitrary or indefinite in theoretic formulation, have precise significances and consequences in particular applications; while particular things, which may be assumed to have a fixed and simple guise in the unchallenged beliefs adequate for habitual practical operations, possess, without suspicion of inconsistency, other specifications and characteristics in scientific theory. The significances of philosophies, even those which are satirized as remote from reality and indifferent to experience, are tested in application to particular subjects; but convictions concerning the nature of things, even those of unwilling philosophers who acknowledge only one dogma of reality, are tested by the persistent differences which are the outstanding fact of intellectual history. Whether or not it is supposed that certainty is possible in

<sup>1</sup> Developed and expanded from a paper read at the annual meeting of the College Art Association, Chicago, January 30, 1941.

human and natural investigations, it must remain no less true that the nature of things, in so far as we know it, is determined by philosophic principles than that philosophic principles are determined, in so far as they are adequate, by the nature of things.

Any general discussion illustrates the principles of philosophy which it employs as much as it illuminates the subject with which it is concerned; but, of all discussions in which philosophy finds an application, the criticism of art is peculiarly balanced in commitment to principle, in determination by subject, and in use of method. As viewed in its application to the practices or objects of art, the problems of criticism seem to be determined in any one formulation of them by concrete and empirically ascertainable facts and to depend on principles which are determined by the same facts. As viewed in the statements of critics and philosophers, however, the problems of criticism seem to have been determined by a vast diversity of principles used in almost countless approaches, each applied to phenomena irrelevant to other critical precepts and criteria. There is as much disagreement concerning the nature of art or concerning what a poem is—whether it is what is seen on the page or what is heard, whether it is what is imagined by the poet or felt by his reader, or what is judged by the competent or what lies behind or above the expression of any poet<sup>2</sup>—as there is concerning the nature of being or concerning what may be said to be—whether only things in time and space exist, or whether existence can be attributed only to operations and relations, or whether to be is to be perceived, or whether true being is Ideal or God alone truly is; nor is there

any more disagreement concerning beauty, form, imagination, or judgment than concerning truth, virtue, knowledge, or law, and much the same indeterminacy is found in the terms and principles chosen as appropriate in any of these discussions. Yet examination of discussions in the philosophy of art affords clearer insight into the nature of philosophic problems and principles than would other applications of philosophy, since its subject matter no less than its history renders improbable the supposition that the resolution of philosophic differences depends on preliminary agreement concerning the character or even the identity of objects treated in rival theories. For agreement concerning an object usually conceals principles, both those employed to arrive at agreement and those ignored lest they forestall it; and the multiplicity and subtle shadings of theories of art adumbrate the general patterns which reappear in philosophic discussions with less distortion than speculations in those branches of philosophy in which dogmatism is more plausible concerning the things which terms point to or designate. The subject matter of the philosophy of art is, whatever its technical definition, a human process and production, and it is therefore influenced by theory as is the subject matter of no other branch of philosophy. Natural philosophers may suggest operations according to the laws they discover, but the "nature" of things is not changed by physics, and moral philosophers must consider the means by which to make their intellectual analyses indirectly effective by habituation or will, apathy or passions. Notwithstanding the tendency of idealists to argue that all things are thoughts, or of materialists to reduce thought to the motion of matter, or of dialecticians to repeat some form of Socrates' identification of virtue with knowl-

<sup>2</sup> Cf. S. C. Pepper, "The esthetic object," *Journal of philosophy*, XL (1943), 477-82; R. Wellek, "The mode of existence of a literary work of art," *Southern review*, VII (1942), 735-54.

edge, there is no real danger of confusing the other branches of philosophy with their subject matters, whereas the discussion of art is itself an art, and is, in many analyses, possessed of the same characteristics and directed to the same end as the arts which are its subject matter.

What men have said about art may be examined and interpreted for philosophic purposes to elucidate the operation of philosophic discussions in general; but such a use of statements will achieve its philosophic purpose only in the measure that the analysis clarifies the interpretation of theories of art, their oppositions, and their histories. Things and principles are not independent, since principles are employed in any statement of things and things are involved in any statement of principles. Consequently, the examination of theories that have been stated or employed, if it introduces order into the principles applied to things, will also indicate the nature of things which determine principles. Three kinds of data may be differentiated if the problems of art are approached by way of what has been said as a preliminary or as a check to treating ascertainable facts or following the implications of defensible theories; for facts, principles, and judgments are not always separate in the statement of a criticism or even the formulation of a philosophy, but they are readily separated in the oppositions and controversies of philosophers. The discussion of philosophic principles and of methods of criticism usually takes the form of arguing in detail, after the relevant objects of discussion have been chosen without argument, concerning the "real" nature of those objects. The nature of art, the appropriate methods of criticism, and the true principles of aesthetics are all in a sense determined by the facts and the phenomena; but we are

dependent on the testimony of critics, sophisticated or naïve, for the report of phenomena and on the principles of philosophers, deliberate or haphazard, for the criteria of their choice and evaluation. The facts may therefore vary or be approached in different ways; the evaluation of the facts may depend on different principles or on principles differently interpreted; the statements of the critics and the principles of the philosophers, finally, are in their expression themselves "things" subject to evaluation and explanation, and they are not exempt from the relativity of art objects and evaluations.

The consequences of these variabilities in art and philosophy, as well as in criticism, are apparent in the difficulties which impede efforts to achieve common designation, mutual intelligibility, and objective evaluation. Since there is little relation between the subjects, the terms, or the principles of the various analyses of art, it is seldom easy to translate the statement of one analysis into an equivalent statement in another; or, if the translation is possible, to relate the two theories to the same subject; or, if they do bear on the same kind of data, to derive comparable evaluations of any given object. In the consequent relativity of criteria of truth and relevance, any thing may be identified as a work of art and any characteristic may make it good or bad of its kind; any judgment may seem as valid or as true as any other; and any theory may be set forth plausibly as the unique and absolute truth or, at least, as more probable than any other theory. These difficulties are not to be solved, if what has been said of the nature of the discussion of art is correct, by referring the problem to irreducible and stubborn facts or (what is the same thing) to indisputable and appropriate theories, but by examining the

meanings of the various explanations and their relations to one another and by formulating criteria for the truth and utility possible to such theories. For such purposes consideration of the nature of art and of the philosophy of art may properly be focused in the statements of the critic and philosopher, since those statements can be treated, without prejudice to fact or principles, first, in their relations to the various subjects to which their principles make them relevant; second, in their relations to other forms of judgment, like science, history, philosophy in general, and art itself; and, third, in their relations to the various terms in which they are stated and which in turn derive varying significances from the ends and criteria proper to criticism in its various modes.

## I

The subject matter and meaning of statements about art—what art is and what one discusses when one discusses art—are determined by the principles of discussion and the things discussed, for the choice of things and of aspects of things relevant to a question is the determination of principles in scope and use. Both the things which are the subject matter and the principles which determine the discussion must be discovered from examination of the terms in which the theories are stated. The words of the statements themselves are ambiguous, and the things which they designate or to which they refer in different theories are too numerous and unorganized to reveal interrelations or system in meanings unless they are arranged according to principles, either principles found in the statements or principles imposed upon them from theories concerning references of signs, forms of judgment, ways of being. The latter adjustment occurs constantly in philosophic discussion and critical

evaluation, for any theory can be stated in terms of any other theory, usually at considerable expense to its sense and cogency, and every theoretic statement involves, in so far as it is presented as true, as adequate, or simply as different, a judgment passed on other theories, usually making further consideration of them unnecessary since they turn out to be irrelevant to the facts, unscientific, an earlier stage in what has been a progressive march toward a truth which will never be absolute, impractical, or abstract. Yet for all the differences in their subject matters and in judgments about them, the principles which theoretic statements invoke seem to bear a simple relation to one another, at least definite enough to bring them into some contact with other theories and to make them echo or oppose statements of other philosophers. Principles which are independent or contradictory determine a meaning for the statements of opposed theories as definitely as the consistent and fruitful principles of a single system determine the meanings of statements within that system; and it should be possible, therefore, to elucidate controversies and oppositions, much as the meaning of any system is reconstructed and understood, by means of the principles involved.

The words which are used to state the principles and to determine the subject matter of modern discussions of art emerge fairly clearly in the statements of their oppositions. The basic question among present-day oppositions, perhaps, is whether one discusses art adequately by discussing something else or by discussing art, for, in the former case, other oppositions turn on what precise subject other than art should be discussed and, in the latter case, on what art itself is. The theories which have been based on the assumption that the meaning of art is ex-

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plained best, or solely, by means of other phenomena have recently, as in the past, borrowed the principles and terminology of aesthetics and criticism from some fashionable science, from semantics, psychoanalysis, or economics, from sociology, morals, or theology. The art object and the art experience are then nothing in themselves, since they are determined by circumstances<sup>3</sup> and require, like the cir-

cumstances which determine them, biological, social, psychological, or historical principles of explanation.<sup>4</sup> The theories

<sup>3</sup> Cf. John Dewey, *Art as experience* (New York, 1934), p. 4: "In order to understand the meaning of artistic products, we have to forget them for a time, to turn aside from them and have recourse to the ordinary forces and conditions of experience that we do not usually regard as esthetic." For Dewey the relevant phenomena are basically biological; cf. p. 18: "In life that is truly life, everything overlaps and merges. . . . To grasp the sources of esthetic experience it is, therefore, necessary to have recourse to animal life below the human scale." The work of art is treated, finally, in terms of experience; cf. *ibid.*, p. 64: "The real work of art is the building up of an integral experience out of the interaction of organic and environmental conditions and energies." It is not to be identified, except potentially, with a physical object; cf. *ibid.*, p. 162: "It has been repeatedly intimated that there is a difference between the art product (statue, painting, or whatever), and the work of art. The first is physical and potential; the latter is active and experienced." A similar endeavor animated by similar purposes may lead to the eventual separation of art from experience; thus, e.g., T. C. Pollock states as his purpose (*The nature of literature* [Princeton, 1942], p. xiii) "to lay a theoretical basis for the investigation of literature as a social phenomenon in terms which are consonant both with our contemporary knowledge of language and with the development of modern science," and in pursuit of that purpose he finds it necessary to differentiate "experience" from "literature" and to define literature in terms of uses of language (*ibid.*, pp. 55-56). This is no theoretic distinction, since Dewey's inquiry would give importance to the continuity of the aesthetic with other experiences and to the problem of conferring an aesthetic quality on all modes of production (pp. 80-81), while Pollock's problem is one of differentiating the use of language from other parts of human experience and the literary from other uses of language. Or, again, the consideration of other phenomena and other problems seems sometimes to lead to the conclusion that all aesthetic considerations are in comparison abstract and false; cf. M. Lifshitz, *The philosophy of art of Karl Marx*, trans. R. B. Winn (New York, 1938), p. 5: "Even the eighteenth century, the classic age of aesthetics, could not remain confined to abstractions such as 'the beautiful' and 'the sublime.' In the background of purely aesthetic discussions concerning the role of genius, the value of art, the imitation of nature, practical problems of the bourgeois-democratic movement intruded themselves with increasing insistence." Theo-

ries themselves, finally, are sometimes refuted, not by reference to what they state, but to the conditions under which they are stated. Dewey, thus (p. 10), disavows the intention of engaging in an economic interpretation of the history of art but states his purpose "to indicate that theories which isolate art and its appreciation by placing them in a realm of their own, disconnected from other modes of experiencing, are not inherent in the subject-matter but arise because of specifiable extraneous conditions." Cf. Dewey, *Reconstruction in philosophy* (New York, 1920), p. 24: "It seems to me that this genetic method of approach is a more effective way of undermining this type of philosophic theorizing than any attempt at logical refutation could be." The variety of ways in which earlier or other theories have been discovered to be impertinent, inadequate, or false would supply a significant schematism for the history of thought. Modern philosophic disputes are usually tangential: positions are most frequently attacked because they are not scientific or fail to treat the facts; they are defended usually, not as scientific and factual, but as indicating work to be done, the progress of science, and the impossibility of certainty.

<sup>4</sup> The explanation sometimes involves the reduction of art to the laws of some other science; cf. N. Bukharin, "Poetry, poetics and the problems of poetry in the U.S.S.R.," *Problems of Soviet literature*, ed. H. G. Scott (New York, n.d.), p. 195: "Poetic creation and its product—poetry—represent a definite form of social activity, and are governed in their development, regardless of the specific nature of poetic creation, by the laws of social development." The explanation sometimes involves the abandonment of older analytical techniques and the use of science in preparation for specifically aesthetic questions; cf. Y. Hirn, *The origins of art: a psychological and sociological inquiry* (London, 1900), p. 5: "Modern aesthetic, therefore, has still its own ends, which, if not so ambitious as those of the former speculative science of beauty, are nevertheless of no small importance. These ends, however, can no longer be attained by the procedure of the old aesthetic systems. As the problems have changed with changing conditions, so too the methods must be brought into line with the general scientific development. Historical and psychological investigation must replace the dialectic treatment of the subject. Art can no longer be deduced from general philosophical, and metaphysical principles; it must be studied—by the methods of inductive psychology—as a human activity. Beauty cannot be considered as a semi-transcendental reality; it must be interpreted as an object of human longing and a source of human enjoyment. In aesthetic proper, as well as in the philosophy of art, every research must start, not from theoretical assumptions, but from the psychological and sociological data of the aesthetic life." It is impossible to deal with concrete works of art or to explain artistic activity in relation to them. The tendency to engage in artistic production and artistic enjoyment for their own sake can be explained only

which have been based on the assumption that aesthetic phenomena should be analyzed separately, whatever the complexities of the relations in which the aesthetic object or experience is involved, have sought principles in the construction and unity of the art object viewed in terms of expression (in which experience and intention are matched to form), composition (in which details are organized in form), or communication (in which emotion is evoked by form). The art object may then be isolated by a variety of devices. It may be isolated by making criticism itself an art, as Spingarn did when he prescribed as the only possible method of criticism the question, "What has the poet tried to express and how has he expressed it?"

by studying the psychology of artists and their public; and in this study of the "art-impulse" and the "art-sense" the "art object" becomes an abstract and ideal datum. Yet such a study will be relevant to problems of aesthetics and criticism; cf. *ibid.*, p. 17: "Thus a theory of the psychological and sociological origins of art may furnish suggestions for those which have been considered as distinctive of aesthetic proper, such as the critical estimation of works of art, or the derivation of laws which govern artistic production." The explanation is sometimes distinct from the purely artistic concerns to which it is nonetheless pertinent; cf. H. Wölfflin, who finds that of the three terms which he uses to analyze "style," one, "quality," is artistically determined, while two, "expression" (which is the material element of style) and "mode of expression" (which is vision), are historically determined (*Principles of art history*, trans. M. D. Hottinger [New York, 1932], p. 11): "It is hardly necessary here to take up the cudgels for the art historian and defend his work before a dubious public. The artist quite naturally places the general canon of art in the foreground, but we must not carp at the historical observer with his interest in the variety of forms in which art appears, and it remains no mean problem to discover the conditions which, as material element—call it temperament, *zeitgeist*, or racial character—determine the style of individuals, periods, and peoples. Yet an analysis with quality and expression as its objects by no means exhausts the facts. There is a third factor—and here we arrive at the crux of this enquiry—the mode of representation as such. Every artist finds certain visual possibilities before him, to which he is bound. Not everything is possible at all times. Vision itself has its history, and the revelation of these visual strata must be regarded as the primary task of art history."

All criticism tends to shift the interest from the work of art to something else. The other critics give us history, politics, biography, erudition, metaphysics. As for me, I re-dream the poet's dream, and if I seem to write lightly, it is because I have awakened, and smile to think I have mistaken a dream for reality. I at least strive to replace one work of art by another, and art can only find its *alter ego* in art.<sup>5</sup>

It may be isolated in relation to the artistic problem of creating art<sup>6</sup> or in relation to the aesthetic experience of perceiving art.<sup>7</sup> It may be isolated by the effort of the scientist to separate from extraneous considerations the form which determines the parts as well as the whole in a work of art.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> J. E. Spingarn, "The new criticism," *Criticism in America: its function and status* (New York, 1910), p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. C. Bell, *Since Cézanne* (New York, 1922), p. 41: "In the pre-natal history of a work of art I seem to detect at any rate three factors—a state of peculiar and intense sensibility, the creative impulse, and the artistic problem." *Ibid.*, p. 43: "The artistic problem is the problem of making a match between an emotional experience and a form that has been conceived but not created."

<sup>7</sup> Cf. the statement of Matisse quoted by H. Read (*Art now* [London, 1933], pp. 72-73): "Expression for me is not to be found in the passion which blazes from a face or which is made evident by some violent gesture. It is in the whole disposition of my picture—the place occupied by the figures, the empty space around them, the proportions—everything plays its part. Composition is the art of arranging in a decorative manner the various elements which the painter uses to express his sentiments. In a picture every separate part will be visible and will take up that position, principal or secondary, which suits it best. Everything which has no utility in the picture is for that reason harmful. A work of art implies a harmony of everything together (*une harmonie d'ensemble*): every superfluous detail will occupy, in the mind of the spectator, the place of some other detail which is essential."

<sup>8</sup> Cf. K. Koffka, "Problems in the psychology of art," *Bryn Mawr notes and monographs*, IX (1940), 243-44: "We shall derive from this relationship a rule for the purity, or sincerity, of art. If, as we said, the artist wants to externalize a significant part of his own world with its particular ego-world relationship, then, if he is successful, the object which he creates will be such as to comply with the demanded relationship; and that means, looked at from the other side, that the way in which the Ego is drawn into the

The echoes and apparent similarities which can be detected in modern discussions of art are due in part to the terms which emerge in them—"form" and "matter," "expression" and "content," or similar pairs of terms—differentiating principles of criticism bearing on organization or unity and materials organized or unified. Moreover, these principles of criticism are given content and precision by use of what seem to be comparable philosophic principles expressed in terms of "processes" and "relations," "symbols" and "effects." Yet, even within the broad modern orthodoxy in which problems are solved by operations and words, there are many warring sects who differ concerning the nature of operations and the analysis of symbols; and for each philosophic doctrine and substitute for metaphysics there is a variant interpretation of artistic form and aesthetic expression and of the material which is formed or expressed. The problem in each case is to locate the art object between artist and audience and in so doing to explain characteristics of the art object in terms suggested by that relation. The opposition between those who examine the art object and those who examine the art object *qua* experience or

act or symbol flows from two interpretations which can be put on those principles of criticism in view of opposed philosophic principles, for the structure of the object of art may be found in traits that it shares with the artist and his audience or in traits which distinguish the artist from the effects of his action and the audience from the stimulus to which it responds. The two interpretations of what seem similar or identical principles of criticism—"form" and "matter," "expression" and "content"—result from differences of analysis; they are not opposed in the sense that one is right and the other wrong (although either may be employed well or poorly by the critic), nor is the difference between them one that need be "resolved" or in which an appeal to the "facts" would embarrass either disputant. They are differences to be explained by the philosophic principles which underlie the use of the terms in criticism; and those philosophic principles, in turn, are expressed in similar terms of "process" and "symbol" interpreted either analogically in a dialectic of being and becoming<sup>9</sup> or liter-

<sup>9</sup> Cf. K. Burke, *The philosophy of literary form: studies in symbolic action* (Louisiana, 1941), p. 124: "It is, then, my contention, that if we approach poetry from the standpoint of situations and strategies, we can make the most relevant observations about both the content and the form of poems. By starting from a concern with the various tactics and deployments involved in ritualistic acts of membership, purification, and opposition, we can most accurately discover 'what is going on' in poetry." *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90: "The general approach to the poem might be called 'pragmatic' in this sense: It assumes that a poem's structure is to be described most accurately by thinking always of the poem's function. It assumes that the poem is designed to 'do something' for the poet and his readers, and that we can make the most relevant observations about its design by considering the poem as the embodiment of this act. In the poet, we might say, the poetizing existed as a physiological function. The poem is its corresponding anatomic structure. And the reader, in participating in the poem, breathes into this anatomic structure a new physiological vitality that resembles, though with a difference, the act of its maker, the resemblance being in the overlap between writer's and reader's situation, the difference being in the fact that these

situation must be demanded by the art-object and not by any outside factors which, however they may be suggested by the art-object, are not part of it. And so we have arrived at what we call purity of art: demands on the Ego must not issue from sources that are extraneous to the art-object." Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 246-47: "Thus what is 'extraneous' to a work of art, in the sense used in defining the purity of art, is determined by the subject and its self-limitation. We saw before that a work of art is a strongly coherent whole, a powerful *gestalt*; and such self-limitation is a definite *gestalt*-property. But this determination of the term extraneous is still too narrow: a demand issuing from a part of an art object is extraneous, and, therefore, an effect produced by it artistically impure, if it is not itself demanded by the total pattern of the work. For a *gestalt* not only makes its own boundaries, but also within its boundaries rules and determines its parts in a sort of hierarchy, giving this a central position, this the rôle of a mere decorative detail, that the function of contrast, and so forth."

ally in a logic of cause and effect.<sup>10</sup> This is a philosophic opposition, and the broad disputes concerning the possibility of con-

two situations are far from identical." *Ibid.*, p. 102: "At every point, the content is functional—hence, statements about a poem's 'subject,' as we conceive it, will be also statements about the poem's 'form'" (cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 73–74). The dialectic of being and becoming is apparent in one of its most competent employments in Dewey's use of such terms as "form" and "expression" in the sense both of a process and of a product and in his treatment of "matter" in both connections. Cf. *Art as experience*, p. 134: "Form as something that organizes material into the matter of art has been considered in the previous chapter. The definition that was given tells what form is when it is achieved, when it is there in a work of art. It does not tell how it comes to be, the conditions of its generation." *Ibid.*, p. 64: "An act of expression always employs natural material, though it may be natural in the sense of habitual as well as in that of primitive or native. It becomes a medium when it is employed in view of its place and rôle, in its relations, and inclusive situation—as tones become music when ordered in a melody." *Ibid.*, p. 82: "Expression, like construction, signifies both an action and its result. The last chapter considered it as an act. We are now concerned with the product, the object that is expressive, that says something to us." Separation of these two meanings would in each instance be an error, and for this reason Dewey regrets the absence in English of a word that includes unambiguously what is signified by "artistic"—the act of production—and "aesthetic"—the act of perception and enjoyment (cf. *ibid.*, p. 46). Nor should artist and audience be separated, since "to perceive, a beholder must create his own experience" (*ibid.*, p. 54), nor matter from form, since "the truth of the matter is that what is form in one connection is matter in another and vice-versa" (*ibid.*, p. 128); and if one makes a conscious distinction of sense and thought, of matter and form, one does "not read or hear esthetically, for the esthetic value of the stanzas lies in the integration of the two" (*ibid.*, p. 132).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Koffka, pp. 200–10: "Perhaps the reader is somewhat baffled as to the kind of object-characteristics we are speaking about. They are to be such as to affect the Selves directly, to play on their emotions; but where are such characteristics to be found in psychology? Indeed there was a time when psychology did not contain any place for such characteristics, when psychological data were reduced to sensations and their attributes, the secondary and some of the primary qualities of Locke. But psychology has changed a great deal since such a statement was true. Now it derives some of its most important explanatory concepts and principles from such perceptual qualities as round, angular, symmetrical, open; fast and slow, rough and smooth, graceful and clumsy; cheerful, glowering, radiant, gloomy—a list that could be continued through many pages. Let us add a few words about it. The examples in the first group, which the reader will be willing to accept at their face-value, show us a feature characteristic of all our samples: they are features that belong to extended wholes, not to atomic parts or points."

ceiving or analyzing individual substances, natural or artificial, and the reality of causes are only slightly transformed, in the discussion of artistic form and content, into disputes concerning the possibility or error of treating the form of the work of art independently of experience or strategies, the reality of the distinction of form and matter, and, most striking of all, the nature of matter—whether it is to be sought, on the one hand, in experience, tactics, emotions, temperament, *Zeitgeist*, racial characteristics or, on the other hand, in the "parts" of the work of art—and the nature of form appropriate to such matters.

When terms are defined by the method of analogy, the principles of the discussion are found in the fundamental metaphor or metaphors.<sup>11</sup> Poetry may be conceived as vision, contriving, or imitation, experience, imagination, or emotion, symbol, action, or relation. Any one of these may be generalized or specified to determine a sense in which all men, or the best of men, or the best of some peculiarly fortunate kind of men, are poets or poems,<sup>12</sup> since the traits of the poet or the structure or contents of the poem are universally those of mankind or even of the Deity and the universe or since the poem or its expression or the emotion it embodies is universally intelligible or universally moving or corresponds with and reflects aspects of the universe or since its effects are homogeneous with the common experi-

<sup>11</sup> Burke (p. 26) recognizes in the synecdoche the "basic" figure of speech for "both the structure of poetry and the structure of human relations outside poetry."

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Coleridge, *Biographia literaria*, chap. xiv (*The complete works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Shedd [New York, 1853], III, 373): "My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in some of the remarks on the Fancy and Imagination in the first part of this work. What is poetry?—is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet?—that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other" (cf. above, n. 9).

ence or aspirations of mankind. When terms are defined literally, the principles of the discussion are to be found in the causes by which an object is to be isolated in its essential nature. If poetry is to be treated as poetry, it must be differentiated by its qualities as a thing or by the nature of the judgment appropriate to it or by its effects. Such distinctions are possible only in the context of a philosophy, consciously or unconsciously employed, in which sciences are distinguished from one another by principles and subject matter and in which the same object, undefined but identified in time and space, is properly treated in the variety of subject matters relevant to its characteristics—physical, psychological, moral, political, and aesthetic. By the use of the analogical method a trait or some traits suggested by the poem, by the poet, or by the audience are used to explain all three—as life is explained by synecdoche, poems by action, and poets by qualities intended to distinguish man from the brute and assimilate him to God—and all aspects of poetry are included in one analysis. By the use of the literal method the aesthetic analysis of poetry is concentrated on characteristics properly attributed to the poem, and other problems are treated in other sciences—the ideas and emotions which the poet sought to express or those which a given audience experienced are treated in psychology, if it is a question of the thought of the poet or the reaction of the audience, or in rhetoric, if it is a question of means and medium, and the moral and political consequences of the poem, if they are considered, require analysis in terms of virtues, actions, and institutions; the poem as conceived in terms of its various causes and effects is distinct from the poem conceived in terms of structure and form. Properly executed and understood,

a complete analysis by the one method should treat all characteristics considered by the other and should even result in comparable judgments: aesthetic, moral, psychological, and practical. But even in that happy coincidence, the statements of the two analyses would clash on every point. There is doubtless but one truth in aesthetics as in other disciplines, but many statements of it are adequate, more are partially satisfactory, and even more have been defended.

Such differences in the philosophic principles which determine the force and application of principles of criticism indicate a second dimension of variation, for even the discussion of the meaning of "process," "relation," and "symbol"—whether they are to be interpreted analogically and organistically or literally and causally—involves the recognition, if only by gestures and asides to discredited and obsolete opponents, that other principles have sometimes been used. In the literal discussion of principles it is a problem of fundamental qualities, sequence of causes, and order of discrimination. The *poem* may be fundamental in the sense that poetic effects can be identified for examination and poets can be recognized for description only if the stimulus of the one and the product of the other possess a distinguishable poetic quality. The *poet* may be fundamental in the sense that poetic composition can be treated as a poem, and its proper poetic effects can be differentiated from the accidental associations of an uninitiated audience, only by appreciating the intent of the poet.<sup>13</sup> The *effects* may be funda-

<sup>13</sup> This process may apparently be carried through a series of steps if one is asked to consider the writer (say, of this paper) who considers the critic who considers the artist (who might conceivably consider, as Peacock did, the intellectual ancestors of the writer who considered the critic). Cf. D. A. Stauffer, "Introduction," *The intent of the critic* (Princeton, 1941), p. 5: "His opinion is a safe guide, therefore, only if we



mental in the sense that an unexperienced poem is no aesthetic object, whatever the virtues of its form and structure, and the poem variously understood is not one but many objects. In the analogical discussion of principles the same shifts of emphasis may be detected in the fundamental metaphor which is derived originally from poet, poem, or audience and is then applied to all three (as when experience, symbolic act, or creation characterize all three)<sup>14</sup> or restricted to two (as when poet

and poem are conceived on a different level of experience or imagination from those which characterize even the prepared reader)<sup>15</sup> or restricted to one (as

know Coleridge the critic as well as we know *Hamlet*, the play criticized. Such examples of the necessity of rectifying a critical pronouncement by some inquiry into the critic's character and bias and intention might be multiplied. They show the question, 'What is the intent of the critic?' may be as important to the reading public as the prior question, 'What is the intent of the artist?' is to the critic himself."

<sup>14</sup> Cf. above, n. 9, for Burke's differentiation of poet, poem, and reader in terms of physiology and anatomy. Poetry, so conceived, is part of our natures, and all men are poets. The symbol of this may be found in men's lives and their susceptibilities to the universal poetry of nature; cf. R. W. Emerson, "The poet," *Works* (Boston, 1929), II, 15-17: "Every man is so far a poet as to be susceptible of these enchantments of nature; for all men have the thoughts whereof the universe is the celebration. I find that the fascination resides in the symbol. Who loves nature? Who does not? Is it only poets, and men of leisure and cultivation, who live with her? No; but also hunters, farmers, grooms and butchers, though they express their affection in their choice of life and not in their choice of words. . . . The people fancy they hate poetry, and they are all poets and mystics!" Sometimes the poetry of nature may take narrow, or even geographic boundaries, in the special sensibilities of a people; cf. W. Whitman, *Leaves of grass*, Preface to the original edition, 1855 (London, 1881), pp. 1-2, 4-5: "The Americans of all nations at any time upon the earth, have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem. In the history of the earth hitherto the largest and most stirring appear tame and orderly to their ampler largeness and stir. Here at last is something in the doings of man that corresponds with the broadcast doings of the day and night. . . . Their manners, speech, dress, friendships—the freshness and candour of their physiognomy—the picturesque looseness of their carriage . . . —the terrible significance of their elections—the President's taking off his hat to them, not they to him—these, too, are unrhymed poetry." Or, again, the poetic nature, although essential to mankind, may be possessed in varying degrees; cf. W. C. Bryant, *Prose writings*, ed. Parke Godwin (New York, 1884), I, 13-14: "In conclusion, I will observe that the elements of poetry make a part of our natures, and that every individual is more or less a

poet. In this 'bank-note world,' as it has been happily denominated, we sometimes meet with individuals who declare that they have no taste for poetry. But by their leave I will assert they are mistaken; they have it, although they may have never cultivated it."

<sup>15</sup> If all men are poets, it is then imperative either to introduce a distinction of degree, completeness, or kind to distinguish the poets from other men or to distinguish the poetic from the appreciative or critical processes. Emerson, following the first of these alternatives, makes the poet representative among partial men and finds half of man in his expression; cf. II, 5: "The breadth of the problem is great, for the poet is representative. He stands among partial men for the complete man, and apprises us not of his wealth, but of the common wealth. The young man reveres men of genius, because, to speak truly, they are more himself than he is. They receive of the soul as he also receives, but they more." Lowell distinguishes two lives, one of which the poet nourishes; cf. "The function of the poet," *Century*, XLVII (1894), 437: "Every man is conscious that he leads two lives, the one trivial and ordinary, the other sacred and reclusive; the one which he carries to the dinner-table and to his daily work, which grows old with his body and dies with it, the other that which is made up of the few inspiring moments of his higher aspiration and attainment, and in which his youth survives for him, his dreams, his unquenchable longings for something nobler than success. It is this life which the poets nourish for him and sustain with their immortalizing nectar." Lowell emphasizes the likenesses which make poets men intelligible to other men rather than the differences in the poet's observation which set him apart; cf. "The life and letters of James Gates Percival," *Works* (Boston and New York, 1891), II, 156-57: "The theory that the poet is a being above the world and apart from it is true of him as an observer only who applies to the phenomena about him the test of a finer and more spiritual sense. That he is a creature divinely set apart from his fellow-men by a mental organization that makes them mutually unintelligible to each other is in flat contradiction with the lives of those poets universally acknowledged as greatest." The second of the two alternatives is involved in definitions of poetry which derive from the genius of the poet or the differentiation of the poem relative to creator and to critic. Coleridge thus relates his definition of poetry to genius; cf. *Shakespeare: with introductory matter on poetry, the drama, and the stage* (*Works*, IV, 21-22): "To return, however, to the previous definition, this most general and distinctive character of a poem originates in the poetic genius itself; and though it comprises whatever can with any propriety be called a poem (unless that word be a mere lazy synonyme for a composition in metre), it yet becomes a just, and not merely discriminative, but full and adequate, definition of poetry in its highest and most peculiar sense, only so far as the distinction still results from the poetic genius, which sustains and modifies the emotions, thoughts, and vivid

when poets are said to aspire to express a vision which cannot be stated adequately in any poem or be experienced fully by any audience).<sup>16</sup> Literally or analogically

representations of the poem by the energy without effort of the poet's own mind,—by the spontaneous activity of his imagination and fancy, and by whatever else with these reveals itself in the balancing and reconciling of opposite or discordant qualities, sameness with difference, a sense of novelty and freshness with old or customary objects, a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order, self-possession and judgment with enthusiasm and vehement feeling,—and which, while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature, the manner to the matter, and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the images, passions, characters, and incidents of the poem. . . .” Samuel Johnson accounts for the changes of judgment and taste by distinguishing the poetry based on nature and truth from that of fanciful invention; cf. “Preface to Shakespeare,” in *Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed. Raleigh (London, 1929), p. 11: “But because human judgment, though it be gradually gaining upon certainty, never becomes infallible; and approbation, though long continued, may yet be only the approbation of prejudice or fashion; it is proper to inquire, by what peculiarities of excellence *Shakespeare* has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen. Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied.” According to Matthew Arnold the critical power is of a lower rank than the creative; cf. “The function of criticism at the present time,” *Essays in criticism: first series* (London, 1910), p. 4: “The critical power is of lower rank than the creative. True; but in assenting to this proposition one or two things are to be kept in mind. It is undeniable that the exercise of the creative power, that a free creative activity, is the highest function of man; it is proved to be so by man's finding in it his true happiness. But it is undeniable, also, that men may have the sense of exercising this free creative activity in other ways than in producing great works of literature or art; if it were not so, all but a very few men would be shut out from the true happiness of all men.”

<sup>16</sup> The content and aspiration of poetry are so lofty that in the fullest sense they may exceed not merely the appreciation of the audience but the powers of the poet, and therefore Emerson concludes that we have no poems, although we do have poets; cf. “Poetry and Imagination,” *Letters and social aims* (Boston, 1883), p. 74: “Poems!—we have no poem. Whenever that angel shall be organized and appear on earth, the *Iliad* will be reckoned a poor ballad-grinding. I doubt never the riches of Nature, the gifts of the future, the immense wealth of the mind. O yes, poets we shall have, mythology, symbols, religion, of our own.” Lowell, on the other hand, distinguishes two functions which are united in the poet, the function of the seer and that of the maker, and which facilitate the distinction between what he sees and what he expresses; cf. “The function of the poet,”

conceived, therefore, the philosophic principles which lie behind the discussions of the critic select for him, by defining his terms, a subject matter and principles from the vast diversity which those terms might encompass. If the poet is the source of distinctions or analogies, the discussion may be of character, knowledge, or technique; or of imagination, taste, or genius; or of beauty, truth, or moral goodness. If the poem is fundamental, all problems may be translated into those of form and content; or of imitation and object; or of thought, imagination, and emotions; or of activity and effects. The effects finally, if they are fundamental, may be treated in terms of expression and communication; or of context and moral, social, economic, or semantic determination; or of influence and emotion.

The critic's discrimination of poet, poem, and effect, like the philosopher's preoccupation with process and relation, is only one part or possibility selected from a larger intellectual pattern which extends beyond, and is constantly intruded into, the more limited vocabularies of the conversations and disputes about art which are expressed in terms of operations and symbols. The principles of art have been sought in the nature of things and in the faculties of man as well as in the circumstances of artistic production or the effects of aesthetic contemplation. The “things” which have been considered have been various—the products

pp. 432-33: “And however far we go back, we shall find this also—that the poet and the priest were united originally in the same person; which means that the poet was he who was conscious of the world of spirit as well as that of sense, and was the ambassador of the gods to men. This was his highest function, and hence his name of ‘seer.’ . . . Gradually, however, the poet as the ‘seer’ became secondary to the ‘maker.’ His office became that of entertainer rather than teacher. But always something of the old tradition was kept alive. And if he has now come to be looked upon merely as the best expresser, the gift of seeing is implied as necessarily antecedent to that, and of seeing very deep, too.”

of human activities or the materials from which they have been worked, the activities or the ideas and emotions from which they originated, and the poet or man himself. Philosophers who treat art in terms of things may seek poetic or dialectical principles, in the former case differentiating the artificial things which are made by man from the natural things which are the subject matter of physics, and in the latter case discovering the qualities of art in nature, which is a "poem" or a "book" or a "creation" or an "imitation." The "faculties" have been used as causes of the production of art objects or as means of their appreciation, and philosophers who seek epistemological or psychological principles in the human faculties either distinguish the visions, powers, and performances of artists from those of other men or treat scientists, moralists, politicians, and even mankind as essentially, though in varying degrees, poets. The "processes" have been the actions and operations, causes and effects, relations and wholes by which men have been prepared to produce objects or to be affected by them; and operational or semantic principles are sought either by distinguishing the symbols or effects of art from those of science, practical affairs, and nature or by stating all human concerns and all knowledge in terms of pragmatic and symbolic analyses. The discrimination of such principles and systems is to be found, not in differences in the gross scope of possible statement, but in what is taken as fundamental and in the precision or effectiveness with which details can be treated. A discussion which is primarily concerned with the effects of art will entail consequences which bear on the nature of works of art and on the nature or intention of the artist; and all schools of philosophers, whether they talk realistically about the work of art or

idealistically about the imagination or the conditions of aesthetic judgment or pragmatically about the experience of art, will be able to state and defend metaphysical and psychological, moral, and aesthetic judgments appropriate to their principles and approaches. The contemporary writers whose statements concerning art and criticism have been used to illustrate a pattern in modern discussions, therefore, exemplify the "philosophic temper of the present" in the sense that they talk in terms of operations and consequent relations, and the dogma is widespread among those who use this vocabulary—among philosophers as well as others who profess an interest in philosophic principles, among physicists who write on the freedom of the will and God, sociologists who write about ideologies and "stages" of knowledge, educators who reform curricula with a view to the "circumstances" of the world today or tomorrow—that there are no independent things or "substances" and that the "faculties" of the mind—and the mind itself—are fictions. Within that terminological agreement, however, all the old disputes concerning principles seem to have survived in methodological oppositions which have introduced splits between pragmatists who would choose significant questions by the criterion of operations and logicians who talk of operations but find it desirable to distinguish operations concerned with things from operations concerned with words or, further, to distinguish words which designate things from words which designate other words; and between linguists for whom things and words are sufficient to explain the phenomena of communication and proof and semanticists who require, in addition, some treatment of meanings or even emotions and motives. These differences of content in the principles signified by the same

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words are clarified in the broader discussion of principles signified by other words, for the ancient problems involved, though unrecognized, in the oppositions of contemporary doctrines are only gradually uncovered in the progress of disputes; and verbally different statements of similar conceptions serve to set apart the different conceptions contained in statements that are verbally similar.

The subject matter of discussions of art is determined by three considerations which bear on things and which depend on principles: first, the determination of the kind of things appropriate to the discussion is stated in general philosophic principles; second, the determination of the mode of classifying such things depends on the methodological definition of principles; third, the determination of the characteristics relevant to the evaluation of such things is stated in the principles of criticism. The meaning and the subject of any critical judgment depend on all three considerations, although writers who use the same or similar terms may agree on one or more, while differing on other determinations of their meanings. Plato and Aristotle, thus, seek general philosophic principles in the nature of things, while Bacon and Kant seek them in the human understanding, and Horace and Tolstoy seek them in operations. Yet each of these pairs, although associated in the choice of philosophic principles, is divided both by the methodological determination and use of those principles and by the principles of criticism determined by them. For all the similarities of their statements, therefore, the six philosophers treat six distinct, though intricately related, subject matters in their analyses of art.

Plato and Aristotle both discuss the nature of art in terms of imitation. Plato, however, uses the distinction of poet (or

maker), model (or object of imitation), and imitation (or construction) to state the principles of his physics as well as his aesthetics and so to account for all things,<sup>17</sup> while for Aristotle those principles are the means of differentiating artificial from natural things; but, although human nature, in the poet and in his audience, is used in his analysis to account for the natural causes and origin of poetry, the principles of Aristotle's aesthetics, as derived from imitation, are the object, the means, and the manner of imitation.<sup>18</sup> As a consequence, although Plato and Aristotle both talk about imitation and about things, they talk about different things. Plato's discussion of poetry is about men, or men and gods, those imitated in the poem, those influenced by the poem, the poets who write the poems and find themselves in competition with lawgivers, rhetoricians, and dialecticians—inferior to all who know the truth and sixth among the lovers of beauty—and the universe which is also a living creature and an imitation; whereas Aristotle's discussion of poetry is about tragedy and epic poetry, their plots which are their end or their soul, and their parts.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Timaeus* 28C ff.; *Republic* x. 596A ff.; *Sophist* 234A-B.

<sup>18</sup> The arts are differentiated according to differences of their means, objects, and manners in the first three chapters of the *Poetics*; the natural causes and origin of poetry are then taken up in chapter 4. 1448<sup>b</sup>4 ff. Once the definition of tragedy has been given, the six parts of tragedy are discriminated as means, objects, and manner of imitation (cf. *ibid.* 6. 1450<sup>b</sup>7 ff.).

<sup>19</sup> The early treatment of music in the *Republic* is in terms of its subject matter, under which is considered the adequacy of tales to the gods, heroes, and men portrayed (*Rep.* II. 376E—III. 392C); its diction, under which is considered the effect of imitative speech on character (*ibid.* 392C—398B); and its manner, under which is considered the effect of modes and rhythms (*ibid.* 398C—403C). We shall be true musicians only when we recognize temperance, courage, liberality, high-mindedness, and the other virtues and their contraries in their various combinations and images (*ibid.* 402C; cf. also *ibid.* VIII. 568A-B; x. 607A). Poets, rhetoricians, and lawgivers who write with knowledge of the truth are to

Kant and Bacon, similarly, both discuss the nature of art in terms of imagination. Kant, however, differentiates the faculties of understanding, reason, and judgment in order to treat the representations of imagination and the judgments of taste; like Aristotle, who distinguishes theoretic, practical, and poetic sciences, he differentiates theoretic and practical knowledge from aesthetic judgment; but, like Plato, whose analysis of art applies equally well to nature, he finds the principles of his analysis, not in the arts or their products, but in the judgment of beauty which applies to nature as well as to art and which has affinities with the judgment of the sublime as well as with the understanding of the purposiveness of nature.<sup>20</sup> Bacon, on the other hand, differentiates poesy from history and philosophy by relating them to the three parts of man's understanding—imagina-

tion, memory, and reason—respectively; like Aristotle, he treats poetry in particular rather than the conditions of art in general, he distinguishes it from history, and he divides it into kinds (narrative, representative, and allusive); but, like Plato, he merges aesthetic with moral judgments.<sup>21</sup> As a consequence, although Bacon and Kant both talk about the imagi-

<sup>20</sup> *Of the proficience and advancement of learning*, Book II (*The works of Francis Bacon*, ed. Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, III [London, 1857], 329, 343 ff.); *De augmentis scientiarum*, Book II, chap. xiii (*Works*, IV [London, 1858], pp. 314 ff.). Aristotle's distinction is that poetry is more philosophic and graver than history, since its statements are rather of the nature of universals, whereas those of history are singulars (*Poet.* 9, 1451<sup>b</sup>5). Bacon draws his distinction from the matter of poetry and therefore makes the difference between poetry and history more nearly analogous to Plato's distinction between knowledge and opinion than to Aristotle's formal distinction between kinds of probability; and, as a consequence, he excludes, as parts of philosophy and parts of speech, all forms of poetry (satires, elegies, epigrams, odes, and the like) except the three which are treated as forms of feigned history, and he derives the moral judgment of poetry from this difference between it and history; cf. *De augmentis scientiarum*, Book II, chap. xiii, pp. 315-16; "As for Narrative Poesy,—or Heroical, if you like so to call it (understanding it of the matter, not of the verse)—the foundation of it is truly noble, and has a special relation to the dignity of human nature. For as the sensible world is inferior in dignity to the rational soul, Poesy seems to bestow upon human nature those things which history denies to it; and to satisfy the mind with the shadows of things when the substance cannot be obtained. For if the matter be attentively considered, a sound argument may be drawn from Poesy, to show that there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more perfect order, and a more beautiful variety than it can anywhere (since the Fall) find in nature. And therefore, since the acts and events which are the subjects of real history are not of sufficient grandeur to satisfy the human mind, Poesy is at hand to feign acts more heroical; since the successes and issues of actions as related in true history are far from being agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, Poesy corrects it, exhibiting events and fortunes according to merit and the laws of providence; since true history wearies the mind with satiety of ordinary events, one like another, Poetry refreshes it, by reciting things unexpected and various and full of vicissitudes. So that this Poesy conduces not only to delight but also to magnanimity and morality. Whence it may be fairly thought to partake somewhat of a divine nature; because it raises the mind and carries it aloft, accommodating the shows of things to the desires of the mind, not (like reason and history) buckling and bowing down the mind to the nature of things." Cf. also *Of the proficience and advancement of learning*, p. 343.

be called "philosophers" (*Phaedrus* 278C-D; cf. also *Laws* vii. 811C-E); poets are in competition with lawgivers (*Rep.* iii. 398A-B; *Laws* vii. 817A-D; ix. 858D). For the low place of the poet in the hierarchy of lovers, cf. *Phaedrus* 248C ff.; and for the universe as a creation of divine art, cf. *Soph.* 265C ff. According to Aristotle, the plot is the principle and, as it were, the soul of tragedy (cf. *Poet.* 6, 1450<sup>a</sup>38); it is the end and purpose of tragedy (*ibid.* 1450<sup>a</sup>22); it is the first and most important thing in tragedy (*ibid.* 7, 1450<sup>a</sup>21). The analysis treats of tragedy in terms of the unity and the parts of tragedies.

<sup>21</sup> *Kant's Critique of judgement*, trans. J. H. Bernard (London, 1914), "Introduction," pp. 7 ff.; Part I, Division I, Book II, "Analytic of the sublime," § 23, "Transition from the faculty which judges of the beautiful to that which judges of the sublime," pp. 101 ff.; Part II, "Critique of the teleological judgement," pp. 259 ff. The nature and the analysis of the Beautiful is distinct from the nature and analysis of the moral, yet the Beautiful may be a symbol of the morally Good; cf. Part I, Div. I, Book I, § 42, pp. 176-77: "Thus it would seem that the feeling for the Beautiful is not only (as actually is the case) specifically different from the Moral feeling; but that the interest which can be bound up with it is hardly compatible with moral interest, and certainly has no inner affinity therewith"; and Div. II, § 59, pp. 250-51: "Now I say the Beautiful is the symbol of the morally Good, and that it is only in this respect (a reference which is natural to every man and which every man postulates in others as a duty) that it gives pleasure with a claim for the agreement of every one else" (cf. also *ibid.*, § 52, pp. 214-15).

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nation and the human understanding, the "imagination" of Bacon is a cognitive faculty, whereas the "imagination" of Kant is a faculty of presentation. Bacon's discussion of poetry is, therefore, about a branch of learning considered as form and matter, whereas Kant's discussion of art is about a form of judgment which relates the presentations of imagination to the concepts of reason and understanding and which applies to natural and artistic beauty.<sup>22</sup>

Horace and Tolstoy, finally, both discuss the nature of art in terms of operations. Tolstoy, however, defines art as a human activity which serves as a means of bringing about a community among men and of furthering their welfare.

*Art is a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them.*

Art is not as the metaphysicians say, the manifestation of some mysterious Idea of beauty or God; it is not, as the esthetical physiologists say, a game in which man lets off his excess of stored-up energy; it is not the expression of man's emotions by external signs; it is not the production of pleasing objects; and, above all, it is not pleasure; but it is a means of union among men, joining them together in the same feelings and indispensable for the life and progress towards well-being of individuals and of humanity.<sup>23</sup>

Tolstoy's judgment of art, like Plato's, is predominantly moral, and, like Kant, he would attribute to art an important function in uniting theoretical knowledge and practical precepts. Horace, on the other hand, is concerned with the effects of poetry, not as they might be manifested in a moral, social, and religious union of

mankind, but as they might be formulated in an "art" of poetry as practical precepts to instruct poets in their function, resources, and ends,<sup>24</sup> and in view of those ends to set forth the means poets should employ if they wish to please Roman audiences and to attain lasting fame. Wisdom is the principle and fountain of good writing, in the sense that moral philosophy and the Socratic pages will furnish the poet material;<sup>25</sup> and poets aim to teach or to please or to profit and amuse at the same time, in the sense that they attract the applause of the elderly by utility, or the young by amusement, and of all if they can blend the two.<sup>26</sup> Like Aristotle, Horace treats of poetry and its kinds, of the parts and the essential unity of the poem; and his analysis of poetry, like Bacon's, consists in treating the various kinds of subjects and the words and meters in which they can be adorned. As a consequence, although Horace and Tolstoy both consider the processes by which a poet fashions a work and the work influences an audience, the processes are entirely different in their respective treatments. For Horace they are external and causal: the poet uses any appropriate materials, old or new, in appropriate verbal form to win the approval of a select, though heterogeneous, audience. For Tolstoy the processes are internal and organic to mankind as a whole: the artist finds his material in feelings, and he makes that material intelligible to all by the form of his statement, in which the feelings are made infectious and by which mankind is united and improved.

If critics and philosophers sometimes find their subject matter in "beauty" and the "sublime," or "taste" and the "imagination," or "action" and "experience," whereas other critics and philosophers

<sup>22</sup> Kant, Part I, Div. I, Book I, § 23, pp. 101 ff., and § 45, pp. 187 ff.

<sup>23</sup> *What is art?* trans. A. Maude, in *Tolstoy on art* (Oxford, 1924), p. 173.

<sup>24</sup> *Ars poetica* 304-8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* 309-11.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 333-44.

treat of poetry, or even of tragedy, the epic, and the lyric, or painting, sculpture, and music, the choice is not arbitrary or without consequences, but follows the methodological devices by which they employ their principles. Aristotle, Bacon, and Horace make use of different philosophic principles, since Aristotle treats of poetry by considering the poem as an artificial object, Bacon by considering it as a branch of learning subject to imagination, and Horace by considering it as a product of the poetic processes of composition; yet they agree methodologically, since they all begin their analyses with, and seek their principles in, a specifically human product, faculty, or activity for the purpose of discovering what is peculiar, in their respective approaches, to poetry or to some kind of poetry. Plato, Kant, and Tolstoy likewise make use of different philosophic principles, since Plato treats of beauty and art in terms of an eternal pattern for imitation, Kant in terms of the a priori conditions of judgment, and Tolstoy in terms of an achievable perfection in human relations; yet they agree methodologically, since they all begin their analyses with, and seek their principles in, something fundamental in the nature of things, or the human faculties, or the community of feelings, which conditions in varying degrees all things, all imaginations, or all actions. What is essential in the one approach is accidental in the other. The philosopher who begins with beauty seldom has difficulty in discriminating or treating various kinds of art or even various kinds of poetry, although, to be sure, he frequently finds nothing real in the arts to correspond to the distinctions of "genres"; and the philosopher who begins with kinds of art objects usually has something to say of beauty, if only to identify it with some aspect of structure, or perception, or

pleasure. The evaluation of the facts, so defined by principles and methods appropriate to them, requires a third step—the choice of the principles of criticism. The judgment of art as art may be separated from the consideration of its effects in education, morals, politics, and all the other relations which art may have to human institutions and activities; and thus Aristotle, Kant, and Horace separate the moral from the specifically aesthetic problem, while making provision, each in his way, for the indirect relation of the two problems—Aristotle by treating the moral and social effects of art in the *Politics*, Kant by relating the beautiful and the good while separating judgment and practical reason, Horace by using the moral precepts among the material to be transformed by the poet. The same facts about the objects of art may be evaluated, on the other hand, in such fashion that there is no separation of the aesthetic from other aspects of human activities, social institutions, or natural processes, except possibly for a tendency in such organic judgments to develop a fundamentally moral, economic, sociological, or religious bias, and thus Plato, Bacon, and Tolstoy each makes use of a moral criterion appropriate to his approach to the criticism of poetry and art—Plato requiring a knowledge of the Good, Bacon requiring the imagination of acts and events more agreeable to the merits of virtue and vice, Tolstoy requiring the perfecting of mankind. Differences which seem inconsequential or insoluble—such as those involved in the long discussions concerning whether painting, music, and poetry are the same essentially but different in detail, or different essentially though similar in some respects, or concerning whether art should be considered in itself or in its contexts, or whether the good, the beautiful, and the true mutually

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condition one another or are mutually independent—become significant if the varying meanings which critical terms assume in the context of philosophic principles are permitted to determine the meaning of the statements and are related to the subject matter of the criticism.

The changes in the subject matter of criticism may be seen compactly in the different applications and relevant criteria which such terms as "matter" and "form," "content" and "expression," have had in different philosophic and critical orientations. Thus Plato, Kant, and Tolstoy treat of the conditions of art rather than of the products of art, but Plato's critical judgments are based primarily on the nature of the object imitated, and the "matter" of art is man or more generally living creatures; Kant's critical judgments are based primarily on the subjective form of judgment, and the object of the judgment of taste is either nature or art, which follows the rule of nature;<sup>27</sup> Tolstoy's critical judgments are based on the feelings expressed and communicated, and not only is the "matter" of art feelings, but the sign distinguishing real art, apart from consideration of its subject matter, is the infectiousness and the quality of the feelings it transmits.<sup>28</sup> The content of "matter" and the relative

importance of "form" and "matter" have shifted in the systematic context of these three kinds of criticism; and yet there is a continuity in the relevant traits of the "object" of art, for in Plato's doctrine it is found in the virtues portrayed, in Kant's doctrine it is found in the purposiveness of the representation, and in Tolstoy's doctrine it is found in the moral and religious feelings transmitted. Or, to reverse the order of comparison, the social community which is to be effected by art, according to Tolstoy, is present in the recognition of the empirical interest in the beautiful by Kant<sup>29</sup> and in the strenuous measures taken against poets by Plato to safeguard the perfect community of the *Republic* and the second-best community of the *Laws* from the dangers consequent on poetry. In general, these three modes of criticism have in common an appeal to criteria exterior to the work of art by which a comparison of arts with one another results in the discrimination of true art from spurious art or better art from worse: in Plato it is the criterion of truth and the moral effects of falsity which justifies the condemnation of poetry in opposition to the art of the statesman; in Kant it is the criterion of genius and the free play of imagination which places music in a place inferior to poetry;<sup>30</sup> in Tolstoy it is the criterion of religion and the infectiousness of feelings that brands

<sup>27</sup> On the superiority of natural to artificial beauty cf. Kant, Part I, Div. I, § 42, pp. 178 ff.; on the relation of art and nature, *ibid.*, § 43, pp. 183 ff.; on the relation of the characteristics of the object in the judgment of natural beauty and the judgment of a product of art, cf. *ibid.*, § 33, p. 158; § 46, p. 188; and § 48, p. 194. On the subjectivity of the judgment of taste, cf. *ibid.*, § 1, pp. 45-46: "The judgement of taste is therefore not a judgement of cognition, and is consequently not logical but aesthetical, by which we understand that whose determining ground can be no other than subjective" (cf. also *ibid.*, § 25, p. 161). The critique of taste, however, is subjective only with respect to the representation through which an object is given to it; it may also be an act or a science of reducing to rules the reciprocal relation between the understanding and imagination (cf. *ibid.*, § 34, p. 160).

<sup>28</sup> Tolstoy, chaps. xv and xvi, pp. 274-96.

<sup>29</sup> Kant, Part I, Div. I, § 41, p. 174: "Empirically the Beautiful interests only in *society*. If we admit the impulse to society as natural to man, and his fitness for it, and his propension towards it, i.e. *sociability*, as a requisite for man as a being destined for society, and so as a property belonging to *humanity*, we cannot escape from regarding taste as a faculty for judging everything in respect of which we can communicate our *feeling* to all other men, and so as a means of furthering that which every one's natural inclination desires."

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, § 53, pp. 215-18. Contrast Aristotle *Poet.* 26. 1461<sup>b</sup>26, in which the comparison of tragedy and epic in terms of their respective audiences is refuted and a comparison in terms of the unities achieved by their respective imitations and the pleasure appropriate to them is substituted.

modern art as spurious in contrast to true religious art. The fundamental differences between them go back to the differences to be found in philosophic principles of processes, faculties, and things. Tolstoy, emphasizing the process of communication, finds *art* supplementing theory by making science intelligible and accomplishing the ends of practice by removing the need of external political control.<sup>31</sup> Kant, emphasizing the judgment, finds *criticism* the indispensable preliminary, not only to the appreciation of art and nature, but to theoretic knowledge and moral decision. Plato, emphasizing the nature of being, finds *philosophy* the necessary source of criticism and the basis of art.

Aristotle, Bacon, and Horace, on the other hand, treat of poetry rather than of beauty or nature or feeling. Yet for Aristotle the plot is the soul of the tragedy and the source of its unity, and words are the means of imitation, while for Bacon words are the form, and the content of the words is the matter which constitutes poesy a branch of learning analogous to

history.<sup>32</sup> Like Bacon, Horace analyzes poetry by treating subject matter and expression; but, unlike either Aristotle or Bacon, he recommends, as a device of imitation, the use of life and customs as an exemplar from which to draw living words; he is convinced that if the matter is given the words will follow, and he thinks of the problem of pleasing an audience in terms of decorum of subject and style.<sup>33</sup> Once again the content of "matter" and the relative importance of "form" and "matter" have shifted in the systematic context of the three kinds of criticism, and yet there is again a continuity in the relevant trait of the object of art which is for these critics the poem, the statue, or some like concrete object which requires some mark or measure of unity. In Aristotle's doctrine, unity is found in the plot, which has a beginning, middle, and end, and the relevant verbal

<sup>31</sup> Tolstoy, *What is art?* chap. x, p. 225: "The business of art lies just in this: to make that understood and felt which in form of an argument might be incomprehensible and inaccessible." *Ibid.*, chap. xx, p. 322: "True science investigates and brings to human perception such truths and such knowledge as the people of a given time and society consider most important. Art transmits these truths from the region of perception to the region of emotion." *Ibid.*, p. 331: "Art is not a pleasure, a solace, or an amusement; art is a great matter. Art is an organ of human life transmitting man's reasonable perception into feeling. In our age the common religious perception of men is the consciousness of the brotherhood of man—we know that the well-being of man lies in union with his fellow-men. True science should indicate the various methods of applying this consciousness to life. Art should transform this perception into feeling. The task of art is enormous. Through the influence of real art, aided by science, guided by religion, that peaceful cooperation of man which is now maintained by external means,—by our law-courts, police, charitable institutions, factory inspection, and so forth,—should be obtained by man's free and joyous activity. Art should cause violence to be set aside."

<sup>32</sup> When Aristotle argues (*Poet.* 9. 1451-36) that the work of Herodotus would still be history if written in verse, the argument proceeds on the principle that the poet is concerned with the probability and necessity essential to the plot which is the "first and most important thing in Tragedy" (*ibid.*, 7. 1450-21, 1451-9 ff.; 8. 1451-22 ff.), and on the principle that the poet is not distinguished by his use of verse as a means. When Bacon argues for the same conclusion, the argument proceeds on the principle that the difference between verse and prose is a difference in form, and on the principle that the difference between history and poesy is a difference in matter. Cf. *De augmentis scientiarum*, Book II, chap. xiii, p. 315: "Now Poesy (as I have already observed) is taken in two senses; in respect of words or matter. In the first sense it is but a character of speech; for verse is only a kind of style and a certain form of elocution, and has nothing to do with the matter; for both true history may be written in verse and feigned history in prose. But in the latter sense, I have set it down from the first as one of the principal branches of learning, and placed it by the side of history; being indeed nothing else but an imitation of history at pleasure." Cf. *ibid.*, Book VI, chap. i, p. 443: "The Measure of words has produced a vast body of art; namely Poesy, considered with reference not to the matter of it (of which I have spoken above) but to the style and form of words: that is to say metre or verse. . . ."

<sup>33</sup> Horace 317-18; 311; 1-23; 86-118; 153-78 and *passim*.

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unity depends on the unity of subject;<sup>34</sup> in Bacon's doctrine poetry is restrained with respect to words but quite unrestrained by matter;<sup>35</sup> and in Horace's doctrine unity has become a matter of decorum which depends on consistency in the relations of the parts of the poem to one another and appropriateness of the language to the matter, but it is otherwise unrestricted except in view of the reactions of audiences.<sup>36</sup> Or, again, the order of the comparison may be reversed, and the instruction, utility, and delight which are prominent in Horace's analysis may all be found in their appropriate functions in Bacon and Aristotle: in Bacon service to magnanimity, morality, and delectation are the mark of all poesy, while the clarification, or concealment, of a point of reason to make it intelligible or mysterious is the special function of one kind, parabolic poetry;<sup>37</sup> whereas in Aristotle

tragedy has its appropriate pleasure, which is that of pity and fear, and the effectiveness of plot structure depends on an element of astonishment, but the moral effects of poetry are reserved for treatment in politics, and poets are quoted for their doctrine in the sciences.<sup>38</sup> In general, the three modes of criticism have in common a concern with characteristics that can be found in the poem: Aristotle seeks a unity in the plot which organizes the parts as material and has its appropriate effect in pleasure; Bacon is concerned with the distinctive matter of poesy, and therefore he does not raise the question of unity but does find effects in pleasure, edification, and parabolic instruction; Horace is concerned with effects, and he is therefore indifferent to matter as such but finds unity in the interrelations of parts with one another and their relations to the manner of their expression. This, again, is a fundamental difference which goes back to differences of philosophic principles, for the first is an organic unity appropriate to a thing; the second is the free organization of matter appropriate to the imagination; the third is a union of content and expression suited to achieve a specified result.

theless now and at all times they do retain much life and vigour, because reason cannot be so sensible, nor examples so fit. But there remaineth another use of Poesy Parabolical, opposite to that which we last mentioned: for that tendeth to demonstrate and illustrate that which is taught or delivered, and this other to retire and obscure it: that is when the secrets and mysteries of religion, policy, or philosophy are involved in fables or parables."

<sup>38</sup> The tragic pleasure is that of pity and fear (*Poet.* 14. 1453<sup>b</sup>11); it is peculiar to tragedy (*ibid.* 13. 1453<sup>b</sup>35, 23. 1459<sup>a</sup>17; 26. 1462<sup>b</sup>12); it depends on the unexpected, the marvelous, and the astounding (*ibid.* 9. 1452<sup>a</sup>2; 14. 1454<sup>a</sup>2; 16. 1455<sup>a</sup>16; 24. 1460<sup>a</sup>11; 25. 1460<sup>a</sup>24). For the consideration of the moral effects of art cf. *Politics* vii. 17. 1336<sup>b</sup>12 ff.; viii. 5-7. 1339<sup>b</sup>10-1342<sup>b</sup>34. For the use of poets for theoretic purposes cf. the quotation of Homer, Hesiod, and myths in *Metaphysics* i. 3. 983<sup>b</sup>27; 4. 984<sup>a</sup>23; 8. 989<sup>a</sup>10; ii. 4. 1000<sup>a</sup>9; iv. 5. 1009<sup>a</sup>28; xii. 8. 1074<sup>a</sup>38; 10. 1076<sup>a</sup>4; and *passim*.

<sup>34</sup> *Poet.* 7 and 8, 1450<sup>b</sup>21 ff.; for the unity of the epic cf. *ibid.*, 23. 1459<sup>a</sup>17; for unity of diction cf. *ibid.* 20. 1457<sup>a</sup>28.

<sup>35</sup> *Of the proficience and advancement of learning*, Book II, p. 343: "Poesy is a part of learning in measure of words for the most part restrained, but in all other points extremely licensed, and doth truly refer to the Imagination; which, being not tied to the laws of matter, may at pleasure join that which nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined, and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things: *Pictoribus atque poetis*, etc."

<sup>36</sup> Horace 23: "Denique sit quod vis, simplex dumtaxat et unum." The difference between Horace and Bacon is indicated by the fact that Bacon's quotation *Pictoribus atque poetis*—"poets and painters have always had an equal power of hazarding anything"—is in the context of Horace's poem (*ibid.* 9-10) an injected anonymous objection which Horace grants only with restrictions on the kind of things that may properly be combined.

<sup>37</sup> *Of the proficience and advancement of learning*, Book II, p. 343: "So as it appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation." In parabolic poetry, ideas which are objects of the intellect are represented in forms that are objects of the sense; cf. *ibid.*, p. 344: "And the cause was, for that it was then of necessity to express any point of reason which was more sharp or subtle than the vulgar in that manner; because men in those times wanted both variety of examples and subtlety of conceit; and as hieroglyphics were before letters, so parables were before arguments: and never-



The intricate interrelations of consequences in statement and doctrine which can be traced to the interplay of philosophic principles and methods make it possible to detect similarities and differences in the various modes of criticism and to trace the transformations which a rule or generalization undergoes as it passes from one intellectual context to another. On the basis of such systematic interrelations the canons of criticism can be compared in terms of the criteria appropriate to each philosophic doctrine. Tolstoy, thus, states three criteria which bear, respectively, on the importance of the content of the work of art to its audience, on its beauty of form, and on the relation of its author to it.

The value of every poetical work depends on three qualities:

1) The content of the work: the more important the content, that is to say, the more important it is for the life of man, the greater is the work.

2) The external beauty achieved by the technical methods proper to the particular kind of art. Thus in dramatic art the technical method will be: that the characters should have a true individuality of their own, a natural and at the same time a touching plot, a correct presentation on the stage of the manifestation and development of feelings, and a sense of proportion in all that is presented.

3) Sincerity, that is to say that the author should himself vividly feel what he expresses. Without this condition there can be no work of art, as the essence of art consists in the infection of the contemplator of a work by the author's feeling. If the author has not felt what he is expressing, the recipient cannot become infected by the author's feeling, and the production cannot be classified as a work of art.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> "Shakespeare and the drama" (*Tolstoy on art*, pp. 445-46). Cf. "On art" (*ibid.*, p. 82): "Therefore, though a work of art must always include something new, yet the revelation of something new will not always be a work of art. That it should be a work of

For Kant there are two problems in art which require critical criteria—the problem of the judgment of the beautiful in art and the problem of the production of beautiful objects of art. Criteria are supplied in both, not by the artificial object, but by the faculties of the mind in their mutual interrelations or as guided by nature. There is no objective principle of taste, but the product of beautiful art must resemble, and yet be distinguishable from, nature;<sup>40</sup> there is no rule to govern the production of art, but genius is an innate mental disposition through which nature gives the rule to art.<sup>41</sup> Plato considers the problem of criticism in terms which reflect the influence of the same three variables—audience, work of art, and artist; but in the orientation of his analysis to truth the criterion of effectiveness is found in the object of imitation instead of the audience; the quality of the art object in the correctness of the imitation; and the virtue of the artist in the excellence of the execution of the copy.

Then must not the judicious critic of any representation—whether in painting, music,

art, it is necessary: (1) That the new idea, the content of the work, should be of importance to mankind. (2) That this content should be expressed so clearly that people may understand it. (3) That what incites the author to work at his production should be an inner need and not an external inducement." *Ibid.*, p. 84: "A perfect work of art will be one in which the content is important and significant to all men, and therefore it will be *moral*. The expression will be quite clear, intelligible to all, and therefore *beautiful*; the author's relation to his work will be altogether sincere, and heartfelt, and therefore *true*."

<sup>40</sup> Kant, Part I, Div. I, § 45, p. 187: "In a product of beautiful art we must become conscious that it is Art and not Nature; but yet the purposiveness of its form must seem to be as free from all constraint of arbitrary rules as if it were a product of mere nature. . . . Nature is beautiful because it looks like Art; and Art can only be called beautiful if we are conscious of it as Art while yet it looks like Nature."

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, § 46, p. 189: "Therefore, beautiful art cannot itself devise the rule according to which it can bring about its product. But since at the same time a product can never be called Art without some precedent rule, Nature in the subject must (by the harmony of its faculties) give the rule to Art; i.e., beautiful Art is only possible as a product of Genius."

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or any other art—have these three qualifications? He must know, first, what the object reproduced is, next, how correctly it has been reproduced, and third, how well a given representation has been executed in language, melody, or rhythm.<sup>42</sup>

Whereas Kant had considered questions which involved the same three variables in terms of two problems concerned with the faculties of the mind and nature, Plato's formulation of the questions leads to the reduction of them all to problems which can be solved only by reference to the nature of the object.

For Aristotle, on the other hand, critical questions bear fundamentally, not on something external to the work of art, but on the poem itself, and questions of fault no less than of excellence are determined in view of the end of poetry and the use of devices within the framework of the plot which is the end of poetry. Questions concerning the artist, the work of art, and the audience, therefore, appear in his criticism, as in Plato's, transformed so as to be related to an object; but for Aristotle, unlike Plato, the orientation is to an artificial, not an eternal or even a natural, object, and the faults, alleged by critics, based on external criteria may be justified by consideration of the work of art itself. Criticism of the poet's art takes the form of alleged impossibilities; criticism of the faithfulness of the work to fact depends on alleged improbabilities; criticism of expression or meaning depends on alleged contradictions and improprieties of language. The dialectic of criticism as developed by the philosophers who argue analogically is in terms which depend on the criteria relevant to poet-poem-audience, or making-judging, or object; but the same problems appear in the tradition of literal criticism in terms which bear on the criteria relevant to organization-con-

tent-language, or making-judging, or language. Aristotle holds that faults in respect to impossibility, improbability, and contradiction may be justified if they contribute to the end of art. Impossibilities are faults in the poet's art, but they may be justified by reference to the requirements of art, if they contribute to the plot by making it, or some portion of it, more astounding.<sup>43</sup> Improbabilities are errors in the representation of fact, but they may be justified by reference to the *better* or to *opinion*, for the artist should portray men better than they are or he should take account of circumstances, of what men are thought to be and of the probability of things happening against probability.<sup>44</sup> Inconsistencies or contradictions of language may be solved by consideration of usage, metaphor, punctuation, and the like.<sup>45</sup> By holding to the

<sup>43</sup> *Poet.* 25. 1460<sup>b</sup>22: "First, with respect to critical problems relating to the poet's art itself, if he has set forth impossibilities he has committed an error; but the error may be justified, if the poet thereby achieves the end of poetry itself—for the end has already been stated—if, that is, he thus makes this or some other part of the poem more astounding. . . . Again, is the error with respect to something essential to the art or only accidental to it? For it is less of an error not to know that the hind has no horns than to make an unrecognizable picture of one." *Ibid.* 1461<sup>b</sup>9: "In general the 'impossible' must be justified relative to the requirements of poetry, or to the better, or to opinion. Relative to the requirements of poetry a convincing impossibility is preferable to an unconvincing possibility."

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* 1060<sup>b</sup>32: "If the objection is that the poet's narration is not true, the answer should be that perhaps it ought to be, just as Sophocles said that he made men as they ought to be, while Euripides made them as they are. . . . Again, relative to the question whether what has been said or done by someone has been well or badly said or done, we must examine not only what has been done or said, inquiring concerning it whether it is noble or base, but also who did it or said it, to whom, when, by what means, and for what end—whether, for example, he does it to secure greater good, or to avoid a greater evil." *Ibid.* 1461<sup>b</sup>12: "Such men as Zeuxis painted may be impossible but may be justified by the better, for the model ought to improve on the actual. The improbable must be justified by what is commonly said, and also by showing that at times it is not improbable, for there is a probability also of things happening contrary to probability."

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* 1461<sup>b</sup>9 and 1461<sup>b</sup>16.

<sup>42</sup> *Laws* II. 669A-B.

conception and standard of the unity of the work, the critic is able to follow Aristotle's dialectic in playing the technique of the artist against the opinions of the audience and both against the probabilities of the matter. Bacon, on the other hand, approaches poetry in terms of the matter accessible to and organized by imagination, and therefore treats of two problems of criticism in his characteristic effort to advance human learning: the estimation of existing poetry—and in this, unlike other branches of learning, he finds no deficiency—and recommendations for improvement—for which he finds no means.<sup>46</sup> Bacon has no criterion of organic unity, and he has little patience with questions of poetic language; his criticism, therefore, is almost entirely in terms of matter as object or product of imagination. Horace, finally, since he approaches poetry in terms of the technique of the poet, uses the terms suggested by *poeta-poesis-poema*; and, since the audience is pleased by a familiar or a consistent matter well expressed, and since words are fitted to matter, the problems of criticism consist—even those which bear on the unity of the poem and the choice of content—largely in questions for which the

relevant criteria are found in terms of words.<sup>47</sup>

In application and precept, therefore, modes of criticism thus differently oriented will select different points of excellence in the work of the artist and indicate different objectives to be urged on his attention. The same traits will be given not merely a different importance but a different meaning and locus in the statements of different critics, and they will become in one view the points of highest excellence and in another faults. Tolstoy insists on the essential importance of novelty in a work of art—it cannot be a work of art without something new in it—and he seeks the novelty in the content. Horace is indifferent to a novelty of content—he recommends a tale newly invented if it is consistent, while urging the traditional subjects even more strongly, particularly the themes drawn from Homer—but he defends with vigor the right of the poet to invent new words or to put old words to new uses.<sup>48</sup> For Kant novelty is translated into the originality of genius and is reflected in the freedom of imagination essential to the judgment of beauty.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Horace 408–53, esp. 445–40: "A good and prudent man will censure lifeless verses, he will find fault with harsh ones; if they are inelegant he will blot them out with a black line by drawing his pen across them; he will cut out pretentious ornaments; he will force you to turn light on things not sufficiently clear; he will argue against what has been said ambiguously; he will mark what should be changed; he will become an Aristarchus"; cf. also *Epistles* II. 2. 106–25.

<sup>48</sup> Horace 46–72.

<sup>46</sup> *Of the proficience and advancement of learning*, Book II, p. 343: "The use of this Feigned History hath been to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it; the world being in proportion inferior to the soul; by reason whereof there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety, than can be found in the nature of things." *Ibid.*, p. 346: "In this third part of learning, which is poesy, I can report no deficiency. For being as a plant that cometh to the lust of the earth, without a formal seed, it hath sprung up and spread abroad more than any other kind." Cf. *De augmentis scientiarum*, Book VI, chap. I, pp. 443–44: "But for poesy (whether we speak of stories or metre) it is (as I said before) like a luxuriant plant, that comes of the lust of the earth, without any formal seed. Wherefore it spreads everywhere and is scattered far and wide,—so that it would be vain to take thought about the defects of it. With this therefore we need not trouble ourselves."

<sup>49</sup> Kant, Part I, Div. I, § 47, pp. 192–93: "Now since the originality of the talent constitutes an essential (though not the only) element in the character of genius, shallow heads believe that they cannot better show themselves to be full-blown geniuses than by throwing off the constraint of all rules; they believe, in effect, that one could make a braver show on the back of a wild horse than on the back of a trained animal. Genius can only furnish rich material for products of beautiful art; its execution and its form require talent cultivated in the schools, in order to make such a use of this material as will stand examination by the Judgement."

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For Bacon, who is concerned, not with the forms of judgment, but with the parts of learning, novelty is found in the lush and uncontrolled growth of poetry which makes useless and unnecessary any plans for its advancement. If the operation of novelty as a criterion is sought in Aristotle, it is found to have shifted once again, from judgment and learning to the object of art as it had shifted from the processes of composition to the faculties of the mind, and to have become the novel and marvelous element which contributes to the structure of the plot, while in Plato it is criticized as the fickle changeableness which is incompatible with the contemplation and imitation of an eternal model of beauty.<sup>50</sup> The choice of principles may

seem a matter of initial indifference or of basic dogma, and the development of statement and determination of method may seem, in the critic who fits what he says to the instances he adduces, to depend on the facts of nature or art or experience, but the judgments of the critic may have a double effect on the facts by influencing the purposes of the artist and the taste of the audience; and therefore it is no less true that the nature and purposes of art depend on what the critic, broadly conceived, thinks his function to be than that the function of criticism is to judge the products and achievements of art.

[To be continued]

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<sup>50</sup> *Rep.* iv. 424B-C.

# NOTES ON MERLIN IN THE *HISTORIA REGUM BRITANNIAE* OF GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

LUCY ALLEN PATON

## I. THE IMPORTANCE OF MERLIN TO GEOFFREY

WHEN Geoffrey of Monmouth undertook to celebrate in his *Historia* the memorable but, as he averred in its opening sentences, neglected deeds of the early British kings,<sup>1</sup> he was too acute an observer not to perceive that if he would command a hearing for the native Britons, a minority manifestly restive against the fusion of their Saxon and Norman conquerors,<sup>2</sup> he must cater to the prevailing influences in contemporary life. That among these the devout belief in supernatural revelation was a potent force is amply testified, and conspicuously so in the attitude toward prophecy manifested throughout the historical chronicles, especially in those that emanated from Norman monasteries.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. Faral, *La Légende arthurienne* (Paris, 1929), III, 71 f. References to the *Historia* below are given according to book and chapter, as is customary, and also according to the pages of the above volume of the text edited by Faral. For Geoffrey's motives in composing the *Historia* cf. *ibid.*, II, 386-401, especially p. 395; F. Lot, *Romania*, XXVII (1898), 570 f.; R. H. Fletcher, *Arthurian material in the chronicles* (Boston, 1906), pp. 54-56, 147; G. H. Gerould, *Speculum*, II (1927), 35-51; W. A. Nitze, *Speculum*, II, 317-20.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. William of Malmesbury, *De gestis regum Anglorum*, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1887-89), II, 472-78; Simeon of Durham, *Historia regum*, in *Opera*, ed. T. Arnold (London, 1882-85), II, 234, 263; Ordericus Vitalis, *Historia ecclesiastica*, ed. A. Le Prévost (Paris, 1838-55), V, 43; K. Norgate, *England under the Angevin kings* (London, 1887), Vol. I, chap. i, especially pp. 23 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. Taylor, *The political prophecy in England* (New York, 1911), chap. iv, *passim*; Faral, II, 51-53.

The interest in prophecy expressed by chroniclers writing from Norman monasteries (e.g., Guillaume de Jumièges, Ordericus Vitalis, Robert de Torigni) suggests the possible influence of the Basilian monks of Sicily and Calabria, who were in general endowed with the prophetic spirit (on the Basilians cf. F. Tocco, *L'eresia nel medio evo* [Florence, 1884], pp. 390-98; L. T. White, Jr., *Latin monasticism in Norman Sicily*

Of the numerous current predictions concerning the fate of Saxon or Norman leaders, few were and are more famous than that purporting to have been received in a vision by Edward the Confessor,<sup>4</sup> which under the figure of the mysterious regrafting of a severed bough on its parent trunk was understood to presage the happy union of the Saxon and Norman royal lines in William Aetheling, son of Henry I and great-grandson of the Confessor. The prophecy is now known to be a fabrication created at about the time of the birth of the Aetheling in 1103, by, or for, Henry with the design of strengthening his own claim to the throne.<sup>5</sup> So effective was the popular regard for vaticination and so authoritative were the words of Edward that the desired interpretation was at once accepted; but after the loss of the young prince in the "White Ship" in 1120 even unquestioning believers were

[Cambridge, 1938], pp. 27-37). Their utterances undoubtedly reached the convents of Normandy during the Norman domination in Italy, when there was close communication between the religious houses of North and South (cf. L. Delisle, in Ordericus, V, xxxvii; E. Pontieri, *Archivio storico per la Sicilia orientale*, XXII [1926], 95 f., 104-15; C. H. Haskins, *English historical review*, XXVI [1911], 435-38; White, pp. 47 f., 50-52). Tocco (p. 399) regards the predictions of Merlin found in Geoffrey as an outcome of the prophetic movement that was fostered through the influence of the Basilians of Calabria. The subject demands a more thorough discussion than can be undertaken here.

<sup>4</sup> *Lives of Edward the Confessor*, ed. H. R. Luard (London, 1858), pp. 431 f.; Osbert of Clare, *Vita Beati Eadwardi Regis Anglorum*, ed. M. Bloch, *Analecta Bollandiana*, XLI (1923), 106-8; William of Malmesbury, I, 277; Richard of Cirencester, *Speculum historiale*, ed. H. E. B. Mayor (London, 1869), II, 286-91.

<sup>5</sup> Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges* (Strasbourg, 1924), pp. 47 f.; *Ana. Boll.*, XLI, 20-25.

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, I



obliged to admit that the accomplishment of the prophecy must still be awaited.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, faith in the reliability of King Edward remained unshaken, for his reputation as a seer did not lack other adequate support. "Multoties diuina mysteria uidit," Ordericus Vitalis asserts, "et uaticinia quae rerum euentu postmodum comprobata sunt, deprompsit."<sup>7</sup> Had not visions heralded his reign and also revealed to him the events that he predicted to his people and that had later taken place—the hostility, for example, between the sons of Earl Godwin, Harold and Tostig, and the death of each; the frustration of the designs of the king of Norway and the king of Denmark against England; a great war between pagans and Christians?<sup>8</sup>

By the time of Geoffrey various members of the Norman dynasty also were reputed to have been made the subject of predictions, usually delivered in visions and by events proved authentic. Thus, supernatural revelation in one form or another was believed to have presaged the death of William, count of Flanders;<sup>9</sup> the disturbed rule of his father, Duke Robert of Normandy;<sup>10</sup> divine vengeance upon

William Rufus for his sins,<sup>11</sup> even the fatal dart of Tyrrell that was its instrument;<sup>12</sup> the royal power, once seemingly beyond his reach,<sup>13</sup> attained by Henry I;<sup>14</sup> the character of his reign, and the ensuing dissensions.<sup>15</sup>

Saxons and Normans alike, therefore, could boast of a monarch who was a saint and seer,<sup>16</sup> and also of the distinction that other-world powers had conferred upon their leaders by prophetic revelations, laudatory or the reverse. It is well known that such reputed vaticination was a valued means of expressing political or national partisanship; but it has not been sufficiently emphasized that a would-be vindicator of British glory was fairly under an obligation to present evidence that the fate of the Britons, no less than that of the Saxons and the Normans, had been foretold by inspired lips. Such evidence Geoffrey was capable of producing. Prophecies concerning the Britons had occupied almost a third of one of his acknowledged sources, the sixth-century *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae* of Gildas; but these were denunciatory, written by a sympathizer with the Roman faction in the island,<sup>17</sup> to administer to both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of his countrymen scathing rebukes, which he en-

<sup>6</sup> *Ana. Boll.*, XLI, 35–37; Luard, p. 432; William of Malmesbury, II, 495; Ailred de Rievaulx, *Vita Edwardi Confessoris*, in Migne, *PL*, CXCV, 774.

<sup>7</sup> Guillaume de Jumièges, *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, ed. J. Marx (Rouen and Paris, 1914), p. 161, an interpolation made by Ordericus at the latest in 1109; cf. pp. xxv f.; *Ana. Boll.*, XLI, 24 f. Our principal sources for the prophecies of Edward, with the exception of the *Gesta* of William of Malmesbury, although a few years later than Geoffrey, are all based upon earlier collections; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 10, 13, 15.

<sup>8</sup> The following references preserve under each source the sequence of the prophecies mentioned in the text. Ailred, pp. 765 f., 773, 777 f., 748 f., 767–69; Luard, pp. 113–15 (vss. 3133–3206), 372 (vss. 358–66), 119–22 (vss. 3341–3452), 372 f. (vss. 381–411); Richard of Cirencester, *Continuator*, II, 261 f., 289, 225 f.; Osbert, pp. 114 f., 75–77, 98–103; Roger of Hoveden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1868–71), I, 108 f.; William of Malmesbury, I, 274–77; *Ana. Boll.*, XLI, 32, n. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ordericus, IV, 485 f.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 383–86.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 86 f. Cf. A. H. Krappe, *Neophilologus*, XII (1926), 46–48, for the source of this story. Other portents also presaged the death of Rufus; cf. M. Paris, *Chronica maiora*, ed. Luard (London, 1872–83), II, 111–14.

<sup>12</sup> Ordericus, IV, 85 f.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 244; Robert de Torigni, *Cronica*, ed. R. Howlett, *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, etc.* (London, 1884–85), IV, 86 (cf. pp. xxxi f.); William of Malmesbury, II, 468.

<sup>14</sup> Ordericus, IV, 87 f.

<sup>15</sup> Guillaume de Jumièges, *Addimenta* of Robert de Torigni, pp. 337 f., believed to have been made between 1142 and 1150 (p. xxviii) but, although a few years later than the *Historia*, representing material current in Geoffrey's time.

<sup>16</sup> K. Norgate, I, 80; *Ana. Boll.*, XLI, 7 f., 13, 15.

<sup>17</sup> Fletcher, pp. 3 f.; F. Lot, in *Mediaeval studies in memory of G. S. Loomis* (Paris and New York, 1927), pp. 240, 241, n. 2, 258.

forced by applying to each class minatory prophecies derived from the Scriptures.<sup>18</sup> Predictions of this type inevitably furnished Geoffrey an additional, even a compelling, reason for making known others more flattering to the Britons, namely, the "Prophecies of Merlin," which, as he declared in words that have never yet been conclusively proved true or false, he translated from the British tongue into Latin<sup>19</sup> and eventually incorporated into his *Historia* as Book VII. Obscure though the source of these prophecies remains, modern critics have long recognized that they were largely written *ex euentu* and, following in the earlier portion the course of the narrative in Books IX–XII of the *Historia*, record in cryptic terms the resistance and subjugation of the Britons to Saxons, Danes, and Normans, and then, passing into pure vaticination, presage the restoration of the British rule.<sup>20</sup> Thus, purporting to foretell events that men knew had taken place, they won credence in the veracity of their prognostications for a vague future.<sup>21</sup> The "Prophecies of Merlin," not merely in its ending, but throughout, is dramatically appropriate to a British seer and reveals that the author, whoever he may have been and whatever additions time may have brought to his original pronouncements, was in sympathy with the Britons and reckoned the Norman Conquest a just retribution upon their sinful Saxon masters.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Ed. T. Mommsen, *Chronica minora saeculorum IV–VII* ("Monumenta Germaniae historica, Auct. Ant.," Vol. XIII), §§ 22, 24, 32 f., 37–61, 76–91; Lot, pp. 230 f., 249–58.

<sup>19</sup> VII, 1, 2 (pp. 189 f.).

<sup>20</sup> See also XII, 17 (pp. 301 f.); *Brut y Brenhinedd*, ed. J. J. Parry (Cambridge, 1937), p. 216. For the substance of the prophecies cf. Faral, II, 55–66.

<sup>21</sup> E.g., Ordericus, IV, 486, 487, n. 2, 492; Suger, *Euxeres*, ed. A. Lecoy de la Marche (Paris, 1867), p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> For three consecutive examples of this anti-Saxon bias in the *Historia* see VII, 3 (p. 192): "Exin

In the *Historia* Merlin also appears as the *deus ex machina* in the dilemmas of various British leaders, the crowning instance of his skill being his manoeuvres that led to the birth of King Arthur. In short, however debatable the origin of Merlin remains, the widely differing advocates of the various theories advanced in regard to it cannot but agree that as prophet and mage in the *Historia* he is singularly (almost suspiciously) well adapted to Geoffrey's purpose and was practically indispensable to him for his execution.<sup>23</sup> "Se non è vero, è ben trovato."

## II. MERLIN AND PICUS

By recognizing Merlin as the eponymous hero of the town Carmarthen (Kaermerdin)<sup>24</sup> Geoffrey has given proof that he connected the Latin "Merlinus" and the

coronabitur . . . aratris vulnerabunt." A prophecy based upon one in Gildas (§ 23) foretelling the occupation and plundering of Britain by the Saxons is distorted and applied to the check that their initial successes received from British leaders for a century and a half, their subsequent sway of three centuries, terminated by the Danish incursions and ultimately by the sovereignty of Canute (Fletcher, p. 60; F. Lot, pp. 243, 248; Faral, II, 17, n. 2). For various explanations of this prophecy cf. San Marte, *Die Sagen von Merlin* (Halle, 1863), pp. 262–64. An echo of earlier prophecies follows in the prediction of the Danish invasions as a divine punishment for the "Saxon treason," namely, the treacherous murder of Edward the Martyr by his stepmother, Elfrida, as well as for other Saxon iniquities. Cf. Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold (London, 1879), p. 167; William of Malmesbury, I, 183 f., 186 f.; Eadmer, *Historia novorum*, ed. M. Rule (London, 1884), p. 3; *Memorials of St. Dunstan*, ed. W. Stubbs (London, 1874), II, 114 f., 117, 127, 215, 309; Richard of Cirencester, *Continuator*, II, 17 f. The next prophecy, which announces the Norman Conquest also as a retribution for the sins of the Saxons, appears in the *Historia* of Henry of Huntingdon (pp. 173 f.), which was written somewhat earlier than that of Geoffrey and which, unlike the latter, includes the Britons among the offenders. On Geoffrey's treatment of the Britons in Book XII, 14–19 (pp. 299–303), cf. Faral, II, 337–40.

<sup>23</sup> Apart from Merlin, prophecy plays a minor, but determinative, part in the *Historia*. See IX, 17 (p. 251); XII, 4–7, 17 f. (pp. 283–94, 301 f.).

<sup>24</sup> *Historia*, VI, 17 (p. 186). Cf. Giraldus Cambrensis, *Opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer et al. (London, 1861–91), VI, 80, 133, 172; Lot, *Annales de Bretagne*, XV (1900), 335, n. 5. For a different effort to explain the name cf. *Brut y Brenhinedd*, pp. 120, 124.

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<sup>25</sup> Lot, *Merlini*, ed in langua p. 16; Far

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Welsh "Myrrdhin," which he may or may not have known as the name of the sixth-century Welsh bard and prince, Myrrdhin, about whom our information at present is derived only from sources believed by the best authorities to be later than the *Historia*.<sup>25</sup> Between "Merlinus" and "Myrrdhin" the hypothetical "Merdinus" stands as an almost necessary and certainly natural intermediate form. Since "Kaermerdin" is much less readily suggested by an original "Merlinus" than by an original "Myrrdhin," the series "Myrrdhin, Merdinus, Merlinus" follows a distinctly more logical course of development than that of the reverse order. But, in either case, we may assume that the intermediate "Merdinus" unquestionably presented itself to Geoffrey's mind. By using the form "Merlinus" he avoided, as Gaston Paris long ago pointed out,<sup>26</sup> the inelegant reminder of the Latin, *merda*, in the former. Whether this was his reason for making the substitution or not, the fact remains that in preference to "Merdinus" he employed "Merlinus."

Alive as Geoffrey was to the association of ideas in a proper name without regard to phonetic laws, the rejected "Merdinus" could scarcely fail to recall to him the Roman agricultural gods with a synonymous name, Sterculus (Stereus) and Sterculin(i)us, who presided over manure as a source of fertility to the fields and of whom the former came to be identified with Saturn, the first king of Latium.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Lot, *Annales de Bretagne*, XV, 520, 535, n. 2; *Vita Merlini*, ed. J. J. Parry ("University of Illinois Studies in language and literature," Vol. X [1893], No. 3), p. 16; Faral, II, 43 f.

<sup>26</sup> *Romania*, XII (1883), 375; Parry and Faral, as in n. 25; Philipot, *Mélanges bretons et celtiques*, ed. G. Dottin (*Annales de Bretagne*, vol. hors série [1927]), p. 363, states that, if Geoffrey had been guided by his ear, he would have latinized the name into Merzinus (or Mirzinus). We may conclude, therefore, that he had met it in a written source, even if also in an oral.

<sup>27</sup> Augustine (*Civ. Dei*), Migne, *PL*, XLI, 572 f.; Isidore of Seville (*Etym.*), *ibid.*, LXXXII, 597 f.; Lactantius (*Inst.*), *ibid.*, VI, 226D, n., 906. For the

"Hunc Stercen siue Stercutium," says St. Augustine,<sup>28</sup> "merito agriculturae fecerunt deum. Picum quoque similiter eius filium in talium deorum numerum receperunt, quem praeclarum augurem . . . fuisse asserunt." To Picus, who shared some of Saturn's attributes and an even greater mythical fame, the diminutive, Sterculinus, appropriately belonged and was definitely attached to the god Picumnus, who by a false etymology was identified with Picus.<sup>29</sup> Through many sources besides those cited above, and notably through Ovid, Geoffrey knew Picus as a god, a king, the heir of Saturn, transformed into a woodpecker (*Picus martius*) by Circe in anger for unrequited affection.<sup>30</sup> He was gifted with prophetic power, which made him redoubtable in augury.<sup>31</sup> As a bird he was sacred to Mars and thus became the protector of Romulus and Remus, and hence, like Picumnus, the tutelary divinity of childbirth and the guardian of children.<sup>32</sup>

Has Geoffrey given any indication in the *Historia* that he associated Merlin with Picus? Merlin is an actor there in three familiar and extensively discussed episodes—"Vortigern's Tower," "The Giants' Dance," and "The Birth of Arthur."

many variants of the name cf. also Macrobius, *Opera*, ed. L. Jahn (Quedlinburg and Leipzig, 1852), II, 55 n.; W. H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen u. römischen Mythologie* (Leipzig, 1884—), II, 224 f.; H. Usener, *Götternamen* (Bonn, 1896), p. 76.

<sup>28</sup> For reference see n. 27.

<sup>29</sup> Nonius Marcellus, *De doctorum indagine*, ed. L. Mueller (Leipzig, 1888-92), II, 170; Servius, *Aeneid* ix. 4; Roscher, II, 214 f., 224; R. H. Klausen, *Aeneas u. die Penaten* (Hamburg and Gotha, 1840), II, 862, n. 1646; W. Mannhardt, *Wald- u. Feldkulte* (Berlin, 1875-77), II, 125, n. 1; L. Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, ed. H. Jordan (Berlin, 1881), I, 375; Forcellini, *Onomasticon*, s.v., Picumnus, Sterculius.

<sup>30</sup> Ovid *Metamorphoses* xiv. 312-415.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. among many sources Pliny *Hist. nat.* I, 18 (20); Isidore, col. 465; Rabanus Maurus (*De univ.*), Migne, *PL*, CXI, 247.

<sup>32</sup> On the legend of Picus cf. also Preller, I, 375-78; Roscher, s.v., Picus; Mannhardt, pp. 334 f.; A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la divination dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1879-82), IV, 121-23, 133, n. 1.

The first<sup>33</sup> Geoffrey appropriated, with some alterations, from the ninth-century *Historia Britonum* of Nennius.<sup>34</sup> The second<sup>35</sup> is a topographical narrative, accounting for the megaliths at Stonehenge said to have been transported from Ireland for Aurelius by Merlin. It is essentially a rationalized and localized account of an exploit attributed to many other supernatural beings who, by abnormal strength or magic means, change the site of seemingly immovable objects. Geoffrey attaches it to Merlin's name and presents it with details evolved by himself, which make the part of Merlin little more than a variant of his role in "Vortigern's Tower."<sup>36</sup> In "The Birth of Arthur,"<sup>37</sup> it is hardly necessary to repeat here, we have the ancient and world-wide theme of the supernatural lover, who in the absence of a mortal husband from home, assumes his form, visits his faithful wife, and becomes by her the father of a heroic son. From the canonical type the *Historia* diverges in that the lover of the story, in order to maintain Arthur's right of succession to the throne, must be Uther Pendragon, who, being powerless to effect his own shape-shifting, is obliged to employ the agency of Merlin. The mission of Merlin thus accomplished, he disappears from the scene; his usefulness for Geoffrey, like that of Uther,<sup>38</sup> is ended when he has been in-

strumental in bringing about the birth of Arthur. Of our three episodes, therefore, the first two were plainly transferred by Geoffrey from other legends to that of Merlin, while the third is his own version of a famous theme. All are composite in character; none in its fundamental story bears any trace of the myth of Picus.<sup>39</sup>

Is this also true of such material in each as is extraneous to the main narrative? In "Vortigern's Tower" the hero of the story in Nennius is named, not Merlinus, but Ambrosius, and is given a double paternity. His mother declares: "Nescio quo modo . . . conceptus est"; a little later Vortigern asks the boy his name: "'Ambrosius uocor.' Et rex dixit, 'De quo progenie natus est?' Et ille, 'Unus est pater meus de consulibus Romanicae gentis.'" This seeming contradiction is, of course, often paralleled in heroic saga, where the offspring of an other-world father and a mortal mother may be interchangeably denominated the son of his own father or of his mother's mortal husband.<sup>40</sup> Here Ambrosius speaks of his reputed mortal father, unmentioned elsewhere, solely to account for his own right to be called Ambrosius, which Vortigern has promptly challenged, since it was a name generally reserved for *uiri nobilissimi*, but which the boy, by virtue of his so-called father's consular rank, might properly bear.<sup>41</sup> All of this Geoffrey discards as

important event in which Uther has individuality and for which he was created by Geoffrey.

<sup>33</sup> Even in the story of the engendering of Arthur, Merlin's part does not form a parallel to the function of Picus (or Picumnus) as the protector of childbirth.

<sup>34</sup> In the *Odyssey* within the compass of five lines (xl. 266-70) Heracles is mentioned first as the offspring of Zeus and then as the son of Amphitryon, the mortal husband of his mother, Alcmena. Mongan, though the son of the god Manannan and Caintigern, is also called the son of Fiachna, her mortal husband; cf. Meyer and Nutt, *The voyage of Bran* (London, 1895), I, 42-45; J. Baudis, *Folk-lore*, XXVII (1916), 56-61.

<sup>35</sup> *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*, s.v., ambrosius; cf. Parry, *Speculum*, XIII, 276, on the rank of Aurelius

<sup>33</sup> VI, 16—VII, 3; VIII, 1, 2 (pp. 185-90, 202-5).

<sup>34</sup> Cf. F. Lot, *Nennius et l'Historia Britonum* (Paris, 1934), cap. 40-42; also pp. 86-90.

<sup>35</sup> VIII, 9-12 (pp. 210-15).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Parat, II, 238-44; W. H. Schofield, *PMLA*, XVI (1901), 417-20; Fletcher, p. 93; E. H. Stone, *The stones of Stonehenge* (London, 1924), pp. 65, 101, 137-42. For similar exploits cf., e.g., W. Stokes, *Revue celtique*, XII (1891), 78-81; P. Sébillot, *Traditions et superstitions de la Haute-Bretagne* (Paris, 1882), Vol. I, chap. I, §11; J. Rhys, *Lectures on the origin and growth of religion* (London, 1888), pp. 190-95; S. Reinach, *Cultes, mythes et religions* (Paris, 1905-23), III, 418-20.

<sup>37</sup> VIII, 19, 20 (pp. 221-25).

<sup>38</sup> The birth of Arthur, as Professor Parry (*Speculum*, XIII [1938], 276 f.) has pointed out, is the one

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<sup>43</sup> VIII,

superfluous for his object, simply remarking that Ambrosius was also called Merlinus<sup>42</sup> and suggesting, after a few words on incubi, that his father, an unknown supernatural being, might have been an incubus. In "The Giants' Dance" messengers sent by Aurelius in quest of Merlin find him by the fountain of Galibes, which Geoffrey pauses to tell us was one of Merlin's favorite resorts. When he is brought before Aurelius, instead of delivering a series of predictions such as he had poured out to Vortigern, he refuses the king's request that he prophesy: "Non sunt reuelanda huiusmodi misteria, nisi cum summa incubuerit necessitas." He then proceeds to give merely the information for which he has been summoned.<sup>43</sup> On the death of Aurelius at Winchester, while Uther is marching through Cambria, there appears in the sky a star with a brilliant ray in dragon form, from which two resplendent beams, one of which ends in seven lesser rays, sweep afar. It terrifies the beholders, and Uther in consternation demands its meaning from his wise men; Merlin explains that it announces the death of Aurelius,

the succession of Uther to the throne, and, the birth of his children, Arthur and Anna.<sup>44</sup>

If now we turn to Picus, we see that he, as well as Faunus (his son according to most sources, but according to some, his father) like many other sylvan deities, became identified with incubi.<sup>45</sup> Picus was beloved by the Naiades—an indication that he frequented springs.<sup>46</sup> His favorite fountain on the Aventine was the scene of one of his best known adventures in the days of Numa.<sup>47</sup> Jove had sent a thunderbolt hurtling across the heavens. "Rex pauet, et uulgi pectora terror habet." Numa, having learned from Egeria that Picus and Faunus would, under compulsion, teach him the proper invocation for propitiating the deity, bound them with chains while they lay sleeping beside the spring after having regaled themselves with wine that he had placed there for them; when they woke, he promised them their liberty in return for the desired information. But they refused to answer until he had unbound them. Of their revelations Ovid says: "Scire nefas homini."

We see, then, that each of the four passages from the *Historia* cited above is extraneous to the main source for the episode in question and also finds a parallel in the legend of Picus.<sup>48</sup> It is noticeable,

<sup>42</sup> VIII, 14, 15 (pp. 217 f.).

<sup>43</sup> Augustine, col. 468; Isidore, col. 326; Mannhardt, p. 116.

<sup>44</sup> Ovid *Met.* xiv. 327-30.

<sup>45</sup> *Fasti* iii. 285-326.

<sup>46</sup> Other elements also enter into these episodes. E.g., Merlin's refusal to prophesy may be due to a reluctance on Geoffrey's part to embark on another series of prognostications; but, although other prophets at times show equal reserve, the feature here is introduced somewhat gratuitously, and it certainly parallels the refusal of Picus and Faunus to answer Numa's questions. Again, the celestial portent that Merlin interprets to Uther is analogous, especially in the circumstances, to the great comet, understood to announce a change of dynasty, that appeared in April, 1066, a few months after the death of the Con-

Ambrosius. The suggested interpretation (R. S. Loomis, *Celtic myth and Arthurian romance* [New York, 1927], pp. 123 f.) that "Ambrosius" here signifies "immortal" and that the boy by his words, "Ambrosius uocor," states his divinity finds little, if any, warrant in the Latin, the adjective *ambrosius* being seldom applied to divine beings but primarily and regularly to their qualities or to objects associated with them. The most famous Ambrosius of medieval times, St. Ambrose of Milan, "nomen gerit Ambrosiae de nectare ductum" (Aldhelm, Migne, *PL*, XIV, 118), and so patent was this derivation that the well-known story of the bees was invented to account for it. Cf. further the much later Jacopo da Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, ed. T. Graesse (Breslau, 1890), p. 250: "Ambrosius dicitur ambra, quae est species ualde redolens et pretiosa. . . . Vel dicitur Ambrosius ab ambra et syos, quod est Deus, quasi ambra Dei." It is improbable that Nennius would have departed widely from the ordinary connotation of the word.

<sup>47</sup> VI, 19 (p. 188); "Merlinus, qui et Ambrosius dicebatur." Fletcher, pp. 18 f.; *Studies in English and comparative literature* ("Radcliffe College monographs," No. 15 [1910]), pp. 21-23.

<sup>48</sup> VIII, 10 (p. 212).



too, in connection with Geoffrey's choice of "Merlinus" as a substitute for "Mer-dinus" that the adjective *stercorosa* was applied to the *merula*,<sup>49</sup> in Italian *merlo* with the diminutive *merlino*, forms both of which appear among the proper names of twelfth-century Italy<sup>50</sup> and which, he it said, Geoffrey might have known.

The above combination of facts, though its significance, being partly conjectural, is open to further interpretation, leads to the conclusion that in his presentation of Merlin in the *Historia*, Geoffrey, following out the train of thought started by "Mer-dinus," introduced features from the myth of Picus<sup>51</sup> and that, consequently,

we have one more reason for suspecting that in many respects, even if not wholly, his Merlin was the product of his own invention. The alluring theory that he was utilizing an early Continental tradition of Merlin must at present be consigned to the limbo of uncertainty, for the sources that might be adduced in its favor are much later than the *Historia* (some, in fact, are modern), and in none does Merlin resemble the Merlin who figures there.<sup>52</sup> It is true that in some of them he is captured very much as Picus was by Numa; but sylvan beings share one another's attributes and activities with confusing facility, and deductions as to their identity, if based merely upon a common

fessor (Ordericus, I, 185, n. 3; II, 116; Guillaume de Jumièges, p. 133), and, according to William of Malmesbury, was observed not very long after ("non multo post") King Henri I of France had died (August 4, 1060) of the effects of a medicinal potion taken contrary to his physician's orders, even as Aurelius was poisoned by a fatal draught given him by a feigned physician; moreover, a monk, Elmer, stricken with terror at the sight of the comet, burst into woeful ejaculations that rival those of Merlin when he beholds the dragon star (William of Malmesbury, I, 276). But, although Geoffrey may have based his account on the above events, there is also a fundamental resemblance between the part of Merlin here and that of Picus in the tale of Numa and the thunderbolt.

<sup>49</sup> Albertus Magnus, *De animalibus*, ed. H. Stadler, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, XVI (1921), 1503 (xxiii, § 128).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. for *Merlino* (1128), Paolino Pieri, *Storia di Merlino*, ed. I. Sanesi (Bergamo, 1898), pp. xi, xiii; for *Merlo*, the twelfth-century "Necrologium S. Andree Taurinensis" in *Monumenta Novaliensis*, ed. C. Cipolla (Rome, 1898), I, 325 (cf. p. 237), published from a manuscript assigned to the same century by Cipolla, who with some reserve puts the earlier part of the codex in the first half of the century (pp. 310, 313). For the possible ornithological origin of the name cf. P. Rajna, *Romania*, XVII (1888), 176, 183, n. 6.

<sup>51</sup> Certain passages in the *Vita Merlini*, which there is good reason for attributing to Geoffrey, are pertinent here. Beside a magic fountain that has restored Merlin's shattered reason and that he has continued to frequent stands an ancient oak, whose growth he declares that he and a woodpecker have simultaneously watched:

"Hanc ego cum primum cepisset crescere uidi  
Et glandem de qua processit forte cadentem  
Dum super astaret picus, ramumque uideret  
[vss. 1273-75]."

A later reference to the *picus* (vss. 1384-86), "culus ab impulsu uicinia tota resultat," in a passage derived from Isidore of Seville (F. Lot, *Romania*, XLV [1918], 10, n. 5) is immediately followed (vss. 1387-1441) by the story of Merlin, who, finding beside a fountain some poisoned apples placed there to tempt him by one of his revengeful flouted loves, distributed them to a few friends who accompanied him, and who were at once seized with madness, while he himself escaped their fate. In outline, and to a certain extent verbally, this episode contains reminders of the revolting transformations that Circe wrought upon the companions of Picus when he was more happily metamorphosed into a woodpecker. Cf. *Vita Merlini*, vss. 1417-32, and *Met. XIV*, 403-13. An adventure of Sindbad (*Voyage de Sindbad*, ed. L. M. Langlès [Paris, 1814], pp. 56-75), who, by his refusal to eat certain food, of which his companions partake, avoids the madness and death that await them, has a very tenuous connection with the *Vita* (cf. Krappe, *Romania LX* [1934], 81), to which an episode in the *Voyage of Maelduin* (cf. *MLN*, XVIII [1903], 165) and the *Metamorphoses*, sources that were easily within the author's range, offer closer parallels.

<sup>52</sup> For these sources, which embody some of the themes connected with Merlin in the *Vita Merlini* and hence lie outside the scope of the present notes, cf., e.g., *PMLA*, XXII (1907), 234-76; Philipot, *Mélanges bretons*, pp. 349, 363; F. Cadic, *Contes et légendes de Bretagne, nouvelle série* (Paris, 1922), pp. 207-16.

It should also be noted that the problematic *Esplumoir* (*Esplumoër*) of Merlin, which figures in the *Didot Perceval* and in the *Meraugis* of Raoul de Houdenc, sources widely separated from Geoffrey in time and space, gives absolutely no warrant for presupposing a connection between the legends of Merlin and Picus. On the *Esplumoir* cf. W. A. Nitzze, *Speculum*, XVIII (1943), 69-79.

episode in their careers, are fallacious. The *Historia* offers no convincing evidence that this detail had already been attached to Merlin's name or that, if Geoffrey knew the tradition that these later sources transmit, he took from it more than the name of his prophet. That he should have done this appears rather improbable, since for the accomplishment of his aim a

British spokesman was an especial desideratum. It was to a British, rather than to a Continental, prototype that he naturally would turn for the name of a seer whose predictions, proclaimed to have been delivered in the British tongue and foretelling the renown of the Britons, he professed to divulge.

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# THE PROLOGUE TO THE LAIS OF MARIE DE FRANCE AND MEDIEVAL POETICS

LEO SPITZER

IN AN earlier article, "Zur Auffassung der Kunst des Arcipreste de Hita" (*ZRPh*, LIV, 237), I had occasion to cite strophe 1631 of the *Libro de buen amor*:

... pequeño libro de testo; mas la glosa  
Non creo que es pequeña; ante es muy gran  
prosa,  
Que sobre cada fabla se entiende otra cosa,  
Sin la que se alega en la razón fermosa,

and to question the "modernistic" interpretation offered by Castro,<sup>1</sup> who would see therein the relativistic idea that the work of art depends upon the interpretations of its readers; as proof of the medieval cast of mind of the debonair Archpriest, I compared these lines with the

<sup>1</sup> For a more recent discussion of Juan Ruiz, the reader may consult the excellent remarks of Maria Rosa Lida in *RFH*, II, 106, and in her edition (*Colección de textos literarios* [Buenos Aires: Losada, 1941]).

<sup>2</sup> From the necessity of glossing the Scriptures (which are written in languages inaccessible to the common believer) arose the feeling that the word of God in its objectivity ranks high above any particular interpretation imagined by human beings (commentators, etc.). Hence the opinion developed that any teaching is subject to more or less "subjective" glosses: in the *Image du monde* (13th cent., ed. Hilka, *Sammlung rom. Übungstexte*, Vol. XIII) the philosopher Secundus has heard the "sentence": "every woman is a fornicatrix": "De la parole tex sens naist | Ou li pluisours metent tel glose [follows one paraphrase]. Autrement dire le poez | Par autres mox, se vous voules [follows another one]. De la glose et de la sentence | Fu cil philosophe en tence ('in doubt')." The next step is: our whole visible world is in truth in the relationship of the gloss to the text: in the same *Image du monde* St. Brandan has seen wondrous birds, and he prays to God: "Diex qui connois les choses, | Dont nus fors toi ne set les gloses, | ... Je te pri que cest pecheur, sire, | Par ta pité reveler daignes | Ce qu'auz iex toi." What he has seen is only one possible version of God's truth. Thus a thought pattern very similar to the Platonic ideology comes into existence: in any phenomenon of the visible world (also in a book) we find only approximations to the Idea, however "subtle" our "gloss" may be. From

Prologue to the *Lais* of Marie de France, who likewise speaks of the "gloss" added by the reader to the text. I sought to show that the idea of an interpretation super-added to the work of art by the reader was connected with the gloss technique of biblical exegesis which, over the course of centuries, develops the whole meaning implied or latent in the text—the progress achieved by the latest readers being foreseen, as it were, by divine inspiration: even such "this-worldly" poets as Marie de France and Juan Ruiz could not help but see their secular works in the same light as that of the sacred book, the Bible;<sup>2</sup> these "cleres malgré eux" saw their

glossing of a purely moral character, such as that to which the Rabbi Sem Tob refers, [the reader]

"Fallará nueva cosa  
de buen saber onest  
y mucha sotil glosa  
que fisieron al testo [sc. los filósofos],"

we come to the point where any work of imagination may become a gloss: according to an apocryphal version of a strophe of the *Coplas a la muerte de su padre* of Jorge Manrique (which W. Krauss, *ZRPh*, LX, 19, considers to be in the spirit of the sixteenth century), the Spanish poet applies the word "gloss" to his own poetry—which he opposes to the "fantastic fabulations" of others:

"No quiero seguir la vía  
del poetico fingir  
en mis glosas  
dexo todas phantasias  
de novelas enxerir  
fabulosas."

And already in the Middle Ages the treating of historical subject matter in the manner of a romance had been considered as a variety of glossing; cf. vss. 4916-19 of *Gille de Chyn* (ed. Place):

"... la glose dist, et la some:  
Gilles de Cyn fu si parfais  
C'aïnc par parole ne par fais  
Ne fu onquez en lui repris."

[Footnote 2 continued on facing page]

books glossed, scanned by eyes eager to penetrate to the "substantifique moelle."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See my article for the models of this expression of Rabelais (and of Berceo: *tolgamos la corteza, al moello entremos*). I may add the following three passages:

Tertullian: "Quis nunc medullam scripturarum magis nosset quam ipsa Christi schola?"

Rencius de Moillens, *Miserere*, str. IX:

"Merveille est coment hom repose,  
Se il entent com j'ai enclose  
Grande matere en ches briés mos. ...  
Hom, entent a che ke tu os!  
Dusqu'a la moëlle des os  
T'en toukera ancui le glose,  
Quant le sens t'en avral desclos.  
Se bien l'as en ten cuer enclos,  
Ja mais te vie n'iert desclose"

(the pair "gloss"—"text" is parallel to that of "marrow"—"bark").

Placides et Timeo (cf. Langlois, *La Connaissance de la nature et du monde*, p. 311): "D'aucuns prétendent que 'la vieille loi et la nouvelle est toute une meisme chose,' comme une noix, dont l'écorce et l'amande n'ont pas la même saveur. Les Hébreux sont dans l'écorce et les Chrétiens dans l'amande."

For a similar contrast of letter and spirit, one may also consult H. Pflaum, *Arch. rom.*, XVII, 301. The figure of the marrow as opposed to the bark (which I have attested in Aulus Gellius) is quite in the Latin tradition; note also *materies*, which originally referred to "la partie dure de l'arbre, opposée à l'écorce, aux feuilles, le tronc de l'arbre, en tant que produisant des rejets" (Ernout-Meillet)—that is, the life-principle (etymological connection with *mater*, 'mother').

[Footnote 2—continued]

Here *la some* would seem to be the gist of the legend surrounding the hero; *la glose*, the totality of written versions (for this meaning of *some* cf. Schultz-Gora, *Arch. f. n. Spr.*, CXXXV, 415). If we consider a gloss as being based upon an original text, then, in such a case, this "text" must be the life actually lived by the hero: the hero becoming thereby a "source" of manifold legends (glosses). From every hero, as from every saint, there emanates a legendary tradition, a "gloss" superadded to the original text of his life. Every exemplary life is a Bible—and who says Bible says exegesis; cf. the epithet dedicated by the Marquis de Santillana to the Virgin of Guadalupe: *texto e admirable glosa* (cited by Mme Lida).

A last vestige of this medieval or Platonic idea of the gloss may be found in Mallarmé's *Après-midi d'un faune*; the Faun, wondering if the nymphs have been dreamed by him or were a reality, says:

"Réfléchissons

ou si les femmes dont tu gloses  
Figurent un souhait de tes sens fabuleux!"

We may, perhaps, assume the following proportion: the figure of speech which paraphrases an idea is to this idea as a gloss to an original text; the different women imagined by the Faun are "fabulous" figures, glosses of the Platonic idea of Woman.

I pointed out in *Travaux du sémin. de phil. rom.* (Istanbul), I, 172, that Dante considers himself as a *chiosatore* of his *libro de la memoria*; he glosses, that is,

In my interpretation of lines 9-22 of the Prologue—

Costume fu as anciens,  
ceo testimoine Preciens,  
es livres que jadis faiseient  
assez oscurement diseient  
pur cels ki a venir esteient  
e ki aprendre les deveient,  
que peüssent gloser la letre  
e de lur sen le surplus metre.  
Li philosophe le saveient,  
par els meïsme l'entendeient,  
cum plus trespasereit li tens,  
plus serreient sutil de sens  
e plus se savaient garder  
de ceo qu'i ert a trespasser—

I adopted in large part the explanation of R. Meissner (*Die Strengleikar*, pp. 280 ff.):

[In dem Satz über Priscian] werden deutlich den schriftstellern die später lebenden gegenübergestellt (*pur cels ki a venir esteient*). Und dieser satz soll . . . offenbar durch v. 17-22 erläutert werden. Ein klarer fortgang wird nur festgestellt, wenn man diese verse nicht auf das eigene leben der philosophen, sondern

in his *Vita nuova*, the ideal pattern of the events which must necessarily transcend his narrative (cf. *ibid.* for other Dante texts). On the gloss in medieval music cf. Bukofzer, *Speculum*, XVII, 165 ff.

We should not forget the fact that even as late as in Calderón (in the *Mágico prodigioso*, *El Joseph de las mujeres*, etc.) and in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* (and Goethe's *Faust*) we find the medieval type of the scholar who, in order to find the real truth, "glosses" a text. J. M. de Cossío in "Siglo XVII" (Madrid, 1939), in an article entitled "Racionalismo del arte dramático de Calderón," points out a typical sequence of dramatic situations in the latter: "(a) Un personaje de vocación intelectual que lee un libro y al tropezar con un pasaje de problemática interpretación interrumpe su lectura. (b) Una digresión de rigurosa dialéctica sobre tal pasaje. (c) Una lucha íntima en su mente. . . (d) Un varón justo que interviene para aclarar las dudas que ocurren al personaje intelectualmente preocupado. (e) Finalmente, su conversión debida a las luces racionales que tal varón le proporciona." The struggle between knowledge and faith starts, then, from a text for which different explanations can be given. The presence of the same type of situations in different countries points to medieval dramatic patterns. In Spain the word *apurar* ('to bring out the pure truth, the real explanation') is characteristic: a Legismundo, too (*apurar*, *cielos*, *pretendo*), starts from a text of Augustine, as is well known.

verschiedene generationen von philosophen bezieht. Dass meine auffassung die richtige ist, dafür sprechen die von Warnke angeführten worte des Priscian, die der Marie de France offenbar vorschweben: *grammatica ars . . . , cuius auctores, quanto sunt iuniores, tanto perspicaciores, et ingeniis floruisse et diligentia valuisse omnium iudicio confirmantur. . . .* Die verse 21–22 . . . beziehen sich nicht auf moralische, sondern wissenschaftliche verfehlungen; die philosophen wussten, dass die jüngeren (und daher klügeren) geschlechter sich besser als sie selbst vor dem würden in acht nehmen können, wobei versehen leicht eintreten; sie wussten es *par els meisme[s]*, wenn sie nämlich ihr eignes verständnis mit dem ihrer vorgänger verglichen. Die dichterin will also sagen: schon die alten wussten, dass die nachwelt klüger sein würde, und dass daher ein schriftsteller nicht das urteil der gegenwart, sondern das feinere verständnis und die höhern ansprüche zukünftiger geschlechter vor augen haben und mit um so grösserem ernst an sein werk gehen müsse. Wir müssen also zu *serreient* (v. 20) ein allgemeines subjekt: die gelehrten, die schriftsteller o.ä. ergänzen, das wird meines erachtens durch die nordische übersetzung und die Priscianstelle erwiesen. . . . Über das missverstehen der Priscianstelle, mit der Marie ihr werk würdig einleiten will, kann man wohl lächeln, aber was sie herausliest, ist doch ein schöner und tiefer gedanke: der schriftsteller soll sich für strengere und weisere richter rüsten, als er sie in der gegenwart findet.

I was content to modify the opinion of this scholar only in a matter of detail: lines 20–22 I took to mean "those to come [whether readers or authors I did not attempt to decide] would take care not to deviate in their glosses from the true sense of the text"; with this I compared the frequent exhortations of the Archpriest to his readers, of the type: *La manera del libro entiendolo sutil*.

It was Meissner's opinion (which, tacitly, I accepted) that *li philosophe* were actually philosophers, scholars—an opinion

which seemed confirmed by Marie's mention of the grammarian Priscian. But the patient investigations over the last ten years of E. R. Curtius into medieval aesthetics and poetics, in which this scholar has shown the unity of thought in the literary productions, both Latin and Romance, of the Middle Ages, cast a new light on this Prologue; in particular, his excellent article, "Theologische Poetik im italienischen Trecento" (*ZRPh*, LX [1940], 1 ff.), forces us to recognize a new meaning for *li philosophe*.

Taking as his point of departure a Latin epitaph on Dante composed by his friend, the poet and professor of Bologna, Giovanni del Virgilio,

Theologus Dantes, nullius dogmatis expers  
Quod foveat claro philosophia sinu,  
Gloria musarum, vulgo gratissimus auctor,  
Hic iacet. . . .

Curtius establishes the significance of the terms *theologus*, *dogma*, and *philosophia*; contrary to what we might naively suppose, these mean, respectively, "poet," "teachings of philosophy," and "poetry." Indeed, Giovanni del Virgilio was anticipating the theories of the "Padova group"—in particular, those of Mussato (1261–1329), who had proclaimed the unity and identity of philology, theology, and poetry, and with whom we find the alternative definitions: *Poesis, / Altera quae quondam Philosophia fuit—Poesis, / Altera quae quondam Theologia fuit*.

Curtius distinguishes in the theories of Mussato and Giovanni del Virgilio five motifs or *topoi* which may be found constantly in the Latin literature of the seventh to twelfth centuries:

1. The equation *poetry = theology*, a commonplace, known to Thomas Aquinas, which was to be found with Cicero, Varro, Augustine, Isidore, Papias, and which goes back ultimately to Aristotle (cf. *θεολογήσαντες* applied to the poets treating mythology; *θεόλογον* men-

tioned also Fathers pagan poet *theologi*; to the Ch

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tioned along with the *ποιητάι*). The Church Fathers were easily enabled to justify the pagan poets by declaring them to be *poetae theologi*; this *theologus* could then be applied to the Christian theologian-poets.

2. The equation *poetry = philosophy*; this was an idea of late antiquity, attested in the Middle Ages as late as the thirteenth century—for example, in the epitaph which Baudri de Bourgueil composed on the “scholaster” Godefroy de Reims (†1095):

Jocundus magnae thesaurus philosophiae

Magnaque musae perit, cum Godefredus obit,  
and in his lament on the failure of the age to appreciate the value of “divine poetry”:

. . . doleo qui gloria nulla poetis . . .

Sunt dii, non homines quos lactat philosophia,  
—here *alma mater* is evidently “science,” identified with “poetry.”

3. Harmonization of pagan mythology with Christian dogmas: since the Jewish and Christian apologists had taught that the poets of antiquity, whom they supposed to have lived after the biblical writers, had borrowed from the latter, so it could come about that the legends told by ancient poets were paralleled with biblical accounts: for example, in the *ecloga Theoduli* (ca. 1000 A.D.), *gigantomachy* = the Tower of Babel; according to Aldhelm, Hercules = Samson. We find with Mussatus, who mentions the first of these examples, the formula:

Quae Genesis planis memorat primordia verbis,  
Nigmatum [= aenigmatum] maiori mystica Musa docet

—the “mystic” or allegorical Muse shall seek to discover a Christian stock in pagan mythology. Or, in the words of Dante (*Inf.*, X, 61):

O voi che avete gl'intelletti sani,  
Mirate la dottrina che s'asconde  
Sotto il velame degli versi strani.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This identification is even older: Demokritos read his philosophy into Homer (with “halsbrecherischen Interpretationskünsten,” says E. Frank (*Plato und die sogenannten Pythagoreer* [Halle, 1923], p. 73), and it is thanks to this presocratic philosopher that surveys of Greek philosophy even yet proclaim him the “Father of Philosophy.”

<sup>6</sup> May not these *versi strani* of Dante, with their allusions to pagan mythology (in this particular passage, to the myths of Medusa and the Furies), be

4. “Biblical Poetics” (“Bibelpoetik”). The theory which held that many parts of the Old Testament (the Song of Songs, Psalms, etc.), as well as the parables of Christ, were, like the Homeric poems, originally written in verse had gained acceptance as early as the time of Josephus and was to win over the Church Fathers. According to these apologists, the sacred texts of Christianity are not inferior in poetic beauty to those of antiquity. Motifs 3 and 4 are in sum only two partial aspects of the general tendency of harmonization (the theological literature of Christianity is poetic, and the poetic literature of paganism is theological), and are subordinated to motifs 1 and 2 (*poetry = theology = philosophy*), which seek to unify the spiritual activities of creative man,

5. —since all the *artes* come from God (Cassiodorus).

If now we turn back to the Prologue of Marie de France, we will recognize in lines 9–16 her own development of motif 3: she tells us that the ancients (probably the pagan poets)<sup>6</sup> expressed themselves *obs-*

compared with the *fablas y versos estranhos*, which, in strophe 1634 of his *Libro del buen amor*, Juan Ruiz presents to the *simples* among his readers—and which he opposes to his (other) stories of stratagems and wiles whose numerous heroes are creatures of flesh and blood?

“fue conpuesto el romance, por muchos males e daños que fassen muchos e muchas a otras con sus engaños, e por mostrar a los simples fablas e versos estranhos.”

Mme Lida sees in these lines evidence of a threefold division of subject matter: moral, epic, and lyrical. But is there not rather involved a dichotomy: on the one hand, stories of (human) trickery; on the other, fables and “strange” verse, that is, myths that are pagan and mysterious—needing allegorical interpretation (cf. the words of Marot in his Preface to the *Romanes of the rose*, cited in my article, p. 282: “Fables sont faictes et inventées pour les exposer au sens mystique”)? But I would not insist on this interpretation.

<sup>6</sup> Compare the Prologue to the fables of Marie de France:

“Ch li seivent de letreüre  
devreient bien metre leur cure  
es bons livres et es escriz  
e es essamples e es diz,  
que li philosophe troverent  
e escristrent e remembrerent ...  
ceo firent li ancien pere.”

Then follows a mention of the emperor Romulus composing admonitory tales for his son and of Aesop

curement . . . *pur cels qui a venir esteient*, that is to say, for future interpreters or readers (not only for the *authors* to come, as Meissner would have it). Marie de France, thinking "medievally" as did the Archpriest, sees her own book as only another "text," which will be "glossed," after the model of the Old Testament commented on by Tertullian, Augustine, Jerome, etc.—after the model of Virgil and Ovid "moralized." The *lur sen* (*sen* > Germ. *sin*, 'sens') is obviously the "Christian" attitude (the *intelletto sano* of Dante) in which the interpreters consult the pagan authors—authors whose *purpose* it was (what a teleological bent she attributes to the imagination of the ancients!) to veil, with the obscurity of poetic form, the eternal verities; doubtless, Marie feels constrained to excuse, in harmony with the apologists, the fictional matter of which she treats as well as the poetic form of her *lais*.<sup>7</sup>

writing fables for his master. Thus *li philosophe, li ancien pere* = the pagan authors. This typically medieval apologetic reappears in vs. 23:

"mes n'i a fable de folie  
u il nen ait philosophie  
es essamples ki sunt apres"

(cf. the *loco amor* justified by the author of the *Libro de buen amor*).

And we find in Brunetto Latini: "*Philosophie est verals encercement des choses naturels et des divines et des humaines, tant comme à homme est poor d'entendre.*" And in Placides et Timeo (cf. Langlois, p. 298) Ovid, when dealing with the elements, is considered a philosopher: "Ainsi explique le philosophe Naso qui reçut le nom d'Ovide pour avoir assimilé le monde à un œuf (*d'orum et dividit*)"—it seems as though he got his name only by philosophizing. (Cf. also Du Cange, s. v. *philosophia*, No. 2, and *philosophus*, No. 1). I have already cited (ZRPh, LIV, 243) the passage, which Curtius failed to mention, of the humanist Politianus, who affirmed that the "theologians" Homer, Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, etc., had hidden their "philosophy" in fables. As late as the fifteenth century there appeared in Madrid a *Philosophia antiqua poetica* of Lopés Pinciano. I imagine that the Spanish word *sabio*, which means not only 'savant' but also 'theologian' (cf. *sabio*, 'rabbi,' with the Spanish Jews of Africa and the Orient), is only a translation of this same *philosophus*, 'medieval encyclopedist.'

<sup>7</sup>Justifications of belles-lettres, with the same moralizing tone, are familiar to us from the works of

Thus the *philosophes* of verse 16 are not savants but precisely those *poetae theologi-philosophi* revealed to us by Curtius—i.e., the "clerks" of antiquity, whom Marie naïvely invests with medieval trappings. These philosophical poets have themselves experienced the changes brought about by time: time has given the correct, the Christian, interpretation of the ancient authors, and Homer and Hesiod (i.e., a Homer and a Hesiod conceived of as potential Christians) have undergone the salutary experience of an "improved" explanation of the gigantomachy which they sang. Marie, like all her contemporaries, is free of any taint of nineteenth-century historicism: the Christian fact has been of all times; if this does not appear at first glance, it will be revealed "in time" by some commentator of a more enlightened age. (Here we are in the presence of the unilinear conception of human history as taught by Augustine.)

For *cels qui a venir esteient*, the generations to come, interpreters or "just readers," will guard against deviating, in their "glosses," from the true contents (*ceo qu'i ert*) of the ancient works. All the instinctive orthodoxy of the Middle Ages is here in this *ceo qu'i ert*; in any poetic work there is only one doctrine, the Christian doctrine, the "right" ("Païens unt tort, Chrestiens unt dreit"). Marie knows that her poetic tales have a Christian significance and that the "subtlety" of future commentators will be exercised to dis-

Juan Ruiz, Boccaccio, and Chaucer. The persistence of this *topos* in the Spanish romances may now be studied, thanks to the article of Krauss, "*Novela—Novelle—Roman*," ZRPh, LX, 16 ff.; we learn, for example, that the author of *Oliveros de Castilla* (1499) compares his romance of chivalry to the works of theology and philosophy. I may add the words of Lope which I have found cited by Madariaga, *Guía del lector del Don Quijote*, p. 49: "Rienso muchos de los libros de caballerías y tienen razón si los consideran por la exterior superficie . . . ; pero penetrando los corazones de aquella corteza, si hallan todas partes de la filosofía. . ."

cover that immutable Christian truth; in this conception of a continuity beyond history there is no place for the "mes vers ont le sens qu'on leur prête" of such a subtle relativist of the modern brand as Paul Valéry. The subtlety of future generations will be no weapon of attack against the building erected by their ancestors; it will only enable them to discern more clearly the archetype architecture; the grandsons will grow in wisdom, not in skepticism.<sup>8</sup>

But why is Marie herself guilty (if indeed she is the one responsible) of a false interpretation of the "eco qu'iert" in Priscian; for Priscian was clearly speaking of the "later authors" of *ars grammatica*—i.e., of "grammarians [not readers or interpreters] to come"? The answer to this question may be found in Curtius once more, who, in an earlier work (*ZRPh*, LVIII, 443 ff.), has explained the histori-

cal genesis and development of this *ars grammatica*: originally *γραμματική* (*τέχνη*) and *litteratura* (the Latin word is a translation of the Greek term) were identical in meaning; since Quintilian the terms have represented, between them, *recte loquendi scientiam et poctarum enarrationem*—that is, exercises of grammar (and style), and explanations of poetry (hermeneutics), or, in modern terminology, linguistics and literary history;<sup>9</sup> even under Charlemagne, *enarratio* was an integral part of *ars grammatica*. Thus it is only logical that Marie should have chosen a grammarian as a type of *homo litteratus*; and, of the two authors of Latin grammar current in the Middle Ages, Donatus and Priscian, she has valid reasons for preferring the latter as an authority in matters of "explication de texte." Whereas Donatus has left us nothing on poetics, Priscian included in his *Præexercitamina* (which were in essence exercises of Latin style) remnants of ancient rhetorics and poetics that he had been able to garner in the East; through him these were transferred to the poets of the Middle Ages.<sup>10</sup> As Curtius says in his lapidary style:

Als Mensch und Bürger ist man Christ, als Rhetor Heide: dieses spannungslose Nebeneinander wurde durch Priscian als Möglich-

<sup>8</sup> I have called attention in my earlier article to a comparable expression, in the Mohammedan and talmudic Hagada, of confidence in the commentators still to come. As for that Jewish "progressivism" which, in attributing to the founder of their religion all the possible ideas of future commentators, can lead only to a quasi-Jesuitic "possibilism," compare the following passage from E. Fleg, *Pourquoi je suis juif* (1928), p. 58:

"Moïse à l'école d'Akiba: quel beau symbole dans ce conte talmudique (*Menachoth*, 296) ! Dieu montre à Moïse, avant sa mort, son disciple Akiba, qui vivra un siècle après Jésus-Christ. Le prophète s'assied à la dernière des huit rangées, dans l'école d'Akiba et il écoute la leçon du Rabbi. Akiba commente la loi de Moïse. Moïse ne la reconnaît pas; c'est pourtant la loi de Moïse. Ainsi, la révélation divine, venue par les patriarches et les prophètes, se continuerait dans la tradition, et, comme l'autre, cette révélation continuée ne parlerait à chaque siècle que la langage qu'il peut comprendre; son expression se développerait, en l'épurant, avec la connaissance humaine [italics mine]. De même que le Nouveau Testament ne contient pas tout le catholicisme, l'Ancien ne contient pas tout le judaïsme."

Moreover, in the Christian works of the Middle Ages the non-Christian divinities or allegories are shown as consulting their own books: not only do we find with Juan Ruiz (str. 612): *El Amor leo a Ovidio en la escuela*, but also in the medieval debates between Church and Synagogue, the latter allegory is represented as consulting its own *auctoritates* (the Old Testament; cf. Pflaum, *Arch. rom.*, XVII, 304).

<sup>9</sup> Schuchardt (*Baskisch u. Romanisch*, p. 56) has explained the Basque *letranta*, 'élegant,' as equivalent to *litteratus* + *elegans* (REW, s.v. *litteratus*); to me this seems to reflect less a popular opinion about the "elegant" man of letters ("der Gebildete pflegt elegant zu sein") than the cultural fact that in the Middle Ages the *litteratus* was one who explained the *elegantiae* of the poets. Cf. the Andalusian and popular Spanish *litri*, 'presumptuous, affected' (with -i as in *cursi*, which is derived from *cursar* and harks back to the same scholastic environment). For the evolution of *grammaticus* in Italian (REW, 3838) cf. E. G. Wahlgren, *Evoluzione semasiologica d'alcune parole dotte* (Upsala, 1936).

<sup>10</sup> Curtius believes, e.g., that the numerous laurel and olive trees of medieval French epic poetry have their origin in the chapter "De laude" of Priscian, where the grammarian admonishes the poets who write in praise of trees (a current *topos*) to choose in preference the laural tree of Apollo and the olive tree of Minerva.

keit dem abendländischen MA. dargeboten. . . . Ein Augustinus hätte die *Præexercitamina* als skandalös empfunden.

Priscian, then, was himself one of those philologists<sup>11</sup> in whom the Middle Ages had to see a philosopher leaving to his commentators the task of discovering the true Christian background—which he had veiled. If the exact text of Priscian was misunderstood by Marie (or by some predecessor unknown to us),<sup>12</sup> she has not

<sup>11</sup> Cf. in Godefroy, s.v. *philosophien*, the two passages taken from the *Barlaam* of Gui de Cambrai:

"Oiles, signor rectoriens.  
Gramariens, phyllosofien. ..."

"Contre Nachor ierent contraire  
Phyllosofien et li gramaire  
Et trestout li rectorien."

<sup>12</sup> This error is not so difficult to understand in the light of that idea of "progressivism" which we have characterized above: Priscian's words, . . . *cuius auctores, quanto sunt iuniores, tanto perspicaciores*, intended simply as a factual statement about the progress which had actually been achieved in grammar during the last centuries of Latinity, came to

failed to understand the role of *homo literatus* which the grammarian was seen to play by the Middle Ages.

We need not, then, be surprised, if, to these *lais* vibrating with humanity, the first woman-poet of the Middle Ages has affixed a prologue containing so much of "literary science," of "literary philosophy," of medieval encyclopedic lore; no less than Juan Ruiz, Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Villon, this great teller of tales of the twelfth century is a "clerc," a *poeta philosophus et theologus*.<sup>13</sup>

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be attracted into the orbit of this dominant medieval idea.

<sup>13</sup> Elena Eberwein, *Zum Problem der mittelalterlichen Existenz* (Cologne, 1932), has shown that the conception of the "aventure" in the *Lais* was not so fundamentally secular as had been thought; the atmosphere of the supernatural in love is not unlike that of the supernatural in religion, as found in the hagiographical legends. The *forma mentis* of Marie is that of an *anima naturaliter christiana*.

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## PLATONIC SCHOLARSHIP IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

FRANK B. EVANS III

LYING between two periods of English literature much affected by Platonism—the later Renaissance from Spenser to Milton and the Romantic age—the eighteenth century by contrast has apparently seemed to students of the Platonic tradition quite barren ground. Only Professor Lovejoy's study of the great chain of being (in so far as he concerned himself with the Platonic elements in that concept) and Professor Bredvold's discussion of some Platonic tendencies in neoclassic aesthetic theory<sup>1</sup> record any considerable part of the history of Platonism from the demise of the Cambridge school to the close of the eighteenth century. Yet there was more. In particular, there was a continuous study of Plato, small at first but increasing toward the end of the century, which cannot be ignored by anyone who wishes to understand the re-emergence of Platonism as a literary influence in the Romantic age. For Romantic Platonism was not a sudden rebirth or an antiquarian return to the Platonizing literature of Spenser and the seventeenth century. It was rather the culmination of an interest in Plato which developed in the eighteenth century.

Early in that century, of course, Plato's reputation was at a low ebb. Some indication of how greatly his fame had diminished may be seen in the fact that, although the Renaissance had produced

about thirty editions and translations of his *opera omnia*, only one version of the whole works, an Italian translation, appeared between 1602 and the last years of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> For the implicit antagonism of the Baconian point of view and Locke's philosophy, together with explicit attacks delivered by Samuel Parker and Lord Bolingbroke,<sup>3</sup> had driven Plato from his eminence as the divine philosopher to a position where he was ignored or even scorned by many eighteenth-century minds. Yet even among the friends of the arch anti-Platonist Bolingbroke, who called Plato "the father of philosophical lying," there were two men who found congenial ideas in the dialogues. Pope, to be sure, knew little of Plato, and that at second hand.<sup>4</sup> But Jonathan Swift owned and annotated a copy of the three-volume Stephanus edition of 1578,<sup>5</sup> and George Berkeley poured the fruits of extensive Platonic reading into his last great work, *Siris*. Berkeley found in Platonism the complement to his early idealism; Swift seems to have been attracted by Plato's political philosophy and elevated moral teaching.<sup>6</sup> Of their con-

<sup>2</sup> There is no complete published bibliography of Plato. See that in F. B. Evans, "The background of the Romantic revival of Platonism" (unpublished dissertation [Princeton, 1938]), and the list accompanying this article.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Parker, *A free and impartial censure of the Platonick philosophie* (Oxford, 1666); Bolingbroke, *Works*, ed. D. Mallet (London, 1754), Vols. III-V, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> A. Warren, *Alexander Pope as critic and humanist* (Princeton, 1929), pp. 187-88.

<sup>5</sup> H. Williams, *Dean Swift's library* (Cambridge, 1932). This edition is item 78 of the sale catalogue; item 588 is a copy of Ficino's Latin translation published at Basel in 1546.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46; see also Swift's *Works*, ed. Temple Scott (London, 1907), I, 259; III, 62, 209; IV, 178.

<sup>1</sup> A. O. Lovejoy, *The great chain of being* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936); L. I. Bredvold, "The tendency toward Platonism in neo-classical esthetics," *Journal of English literary history*, I (1934), 91-119. Leslie Stephen's *History of English thought in the eighteenth century* gives no space to Plato, and J. H. Muirhead, *The Platonic tradition in Anglo-Saxon philosophy* (London, 1931), passes over the eighteenth century rapidly; most of the few writings which do mention Plato will be noted below.



temporaries, Addison quoted occasionally from Plato in support of moral precepts;<sup>7</sup> Shaftesbury, though essentially Stoic, borrowed enough of Plato's manner and doctrine to have himself called a Platonist by his own age and even by some modern scholars;<sup>8</sup> Mark Akenside knew at least the *Laws* and the *Symposium*.<sup>9</sup> Later, Lord Chesterfield recommended Plato to his son and found pleasure himself particularly in the *Symposium*.<sup>10</sup> In short, although Plato's reputation had declined greatly from the preceding age, there was no dearth in the eighteenth century of important men who had read and appreciated his dialogues.

Neither, despite the failure of over a century and a half to produce more than one complete version of Plato's works, was there any lack of translations and editions of single dialogues and selections. Twenty-nine of the thirty-five dialogues included in the traditional canon appeared singly or in groups between 1670 and 1800, in Greek editions or in French or English translation; the only noteworthy omission was the *Critias*. English editors alone accounted for twenty-six dialogues. Not only were most of the dialogues thus available; many were republished frequently enough to suggest a rather general demand. The *Phaedo*, for instance, proved quite popular, as it always has: if we count reprintings, it appeared thirteen times in Greek, twelve times in English,

and four times in French. The *Crito*, *Apology*, and *Euthyphro* were next in popularity, each having more than twenty appearances; and there were at least ten publications of each of half-a-dozen other dialogues. Perhaps the most surprising fact is that, of twenty-two dialogues translated into English before 1800, twenty were first translated in the eighteenth century. In Greek and French versions, too, the fifty years between 1725 and 1775 were more prolific than any other half-century before 1800 except that from 1525 to 1575.

This hitherto unnoticed activity in Platonic scholarship demands a survey, which I have here limited to a survey of important editions and translations published in England or easily available to Englishmen. The most considerable of these was *The works of Plato abridg'd*, published in two volumes at London in 1701. These volumes were translated by several unknown hands from André Dacier's *Les Œuvres de Platon*, an incomplete French version published at Paris in 1699 and twice thereafter. The English version was reprinted five times: in 1719-20, 1739, 1749, 1761, and 1772. It contained the spurious dialogues *Second Alcibiades*, *Theages*, and *Lovers*, the doubtful *First Alcibiades*, and the *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*, *Laches*, and *Protagoras*; there were also, besides notes, a biography of Plato and a long introductory discourse in which Dacier argued that Plato was an inspired witness to Christian theology. The translations are reasonably accurate and readable, but the notes, which often attempt to reconcile Platonism and Christianity (in the Renaissance manner), abound in errors.

Four of the six genuine dialogues in *The works of Plato abridg'd* (the *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo*) appeared more frequently than any others in the eighteenth century, since they form a

<sup>7</sup> *Tatler*, No. 90; *Spectator*, Nos. 90, 207, 237, 507, 557.

<sup>8</sup> W. Warburton, *Divine legation*, ed. R. Hurd (London, 1837), I, 91; W. E. Alderman, "The significance of Shaftesbury in English speculation," *PMLA*, XXXVIII (1932), 175. More exact estimates of Shaftesbury's "Platonism" are given by C. A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the ethical poets in England, 1700-1760," *PMLA*, XXXI (1916), 268-69, and by L. I. Bredvold, pp. 107-8.

<sup>9</sup> *Pleasures of the imagination* (London, 1744), pp. 62-63; *Works* (London, 1772), p. 363.

<sup>10</sup> *Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope*, ed. B. Dobrée (London, 1932), IV, 1610; *World*, No. 90 (September 19, 1754).

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group—the trial and death of Socrates—and serve as an excellent introduction to the entire Platonic canon. Of the half-dozen distinct editions and translations containing at least one of these dialogues, Nathaniel Forster's edition of the *Lovers*, *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo* is especially interesting. It was one of the most popular eighteenth-century editions, being published at Oxford in 1745, 1752, 1765, and 1800; there is evidence that it was required reading in the fourth year at the university.<sup>11</sup> From the preface we learn that Forster followed the usual practice of editing, taking his Greek text from the 1578 Stephanus edition and emending freely the Latin translation by Ficino. He gathered notes and conjectural emendations from several sources, particularly from Zachariah Mudge, a Platonic amateur who, according to Burke, influenced the young Joshua Reynolds.<sup>12</sup> Forster also explains that the *Euthyphro* and *Lovers* are included in his volume as an introduction to the dialogues about Socrates' trial and death, thus confirming the inference that the Socratic group of dialogues was the nucleus of eighteenth-century Platonic study.

Other dialogues, however, appealed to other interests of the time. One of these was the *Menezemus*, translated by Gilbert West apparently for its interest as a panegyric. Plato's oratory and rhetoric also engaged the attention of James Geddes, who quotes in his *Essay on composition* from the last part of the *Phaedrus* and summarizes the remarks on oratory in the *Gorgias*.<sup>13</sup> John Lawson's *Lectures concerning oratory* (Dublin, 1758) likewise discuss the *Phaedrus*. Mention should be made al-

so of a few other notable editions, such as Edmund Massey's *Republic*, Spens's translation of that dialogue, and the most scholarly eighteenth-century edition in England, Martin Joseph Routh's *Euthydemus* and *Gorgias*.

These publications show that readers of Plato were not extinct, though they were certainly not legion. In 1751 the Foulis brothers felt sufficiently confident to propose undertaking by subscription a sumptuous edition of all the dialogues and engaged James Moor, professor of Greek at Glasgow, to supervise the first volume, which was to contain the *Laws* and *Epinomis*.<sup>14</sup> In the same year, Principal Thomas Blackwell of Aberdeen, who seems to have offered his services to the Foulises but on prohibitive terms, announced an edition of his own.<sup>15</sup> Nothing came of either of these proposals, no doubt because subscribers were too few. But it is instructive to learn that in the middle of the eighteenth century such proposals were seriously made.

In the last forty years of the century Platonic scholars were most active. Men began to question the conventional attitude of disparagement toward Plato which had been established after the controversy between ancients and moderns. How widespread the change of sentiment was becoming is shown by the appearance in 1760 of *Remarks on the life and writings of Plato: with answers to the principal objections against him; and a general view of his dialogues*, by an obscure Edinburgh physician, Ebenezer Macfaite. This book re-

<sup>11</sup> *Gentleman's magazine*, XXI (1751), 430-31.

<sup>12</sup> L. M. Quiller-Couch, *Reminiscences of Oxford by Oxford men, 1559-1850* (Oxford, 1892), p. 137.

<sup>13</sup> C. R. Leslie and T. Taylor, *Life and times of Sir Joshua Reynolds* (London, 1865), II, 638-39.

<sup>14</sup> *An essay on the composition and manner of writing of the ancients, particularly Plato* (Glasgow, 1748).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 383. See also *DNB* on Blackwell. A. C. Fraser, *The Life and letters of George Berkeley* (Oxford, 1871), p. 327, says that the Foulises first proposed an edition in 1746, when Blackwell made his offer; I have found no evidence for this statement. Although Blackwell's proposal of August, 1751, appeared in the *Gentleman's magazine* before that of the Foulises (September), the latter is dated from Glasgow, January 7; and Berkeley (*loc. cit.*) wrote of the proposed Foulis edition on March 30.

flected, rather than directed, a new opinion of Plato. The *Monthly review*, although on the whole unfriendly, said that Macfaite had vindicated Plato somewhat from "the charge of being mysterious and obscure" and suggested that the "moderns" would find it to their advantage to know more than they did of Plato and other ancient philosophers.<sup>16</sup> At the time of Macfaite's *Remarks* English translations began to appear with increasing frequency. The renewal of interest thus indicated, which was European as well as English, is marked also by the Bipont Society's publication at Zweibrücken, from 1781 to 1787, of ten volumes containing all of Plato's works, in Greek with a Latin translation—the first complete version, except an Italian translation, to appear after 1602.

In England, Plato had three enthusiastic advocates during the latter half of the century. Two of them were translators—Floyer Sydenham and Thomas Taylor—and one was the poet, Gray. Gray's study of Plato,<sup>17</sup> in the years from 1743 to 1756, resulted in no publications, nor did it affect his poetry in any tangible way. But he talked of Plato frequently and left at his death over two hundred pages of pregnant notes.<sup>18</sup> What Gray admired in Plato, according to Norton Nicholls, "was not his mystic doctrines which he did not pretend to understand, nor his sophistry, but his excellent sense, sublime morality, elegant style, & the perfect dramatic propriety of his dialogues."<sup>19</sup> The notes reflect this and more. Into them Gray poured his wealth of classical learning, ex-

plaining obscurities and dealing in scholarly fashion, as no one else had done, with the problems of dating the dialogues. His summaries often glow with enthusiastic admiration, especially when a particularly noble passage of Plato lies before him. And, though there is no evidence that Gray fostered the study of Plato in England generally, there can be little doubt that in talk he communicated some of his enthusiasm for his "favorite author" to Norton Nicholls and his other younger friends or that his own philosophic life owed something to his Platonic reading.

Floyer Sydenham was the first English scholar to set about translating the whole of Plato into his native tongue. We know little more of him than that he was born in 1710, took his degree at Oxford in 1734, practiced law at Lincoln's Inn, and died in a debtor's prison, April 1, 1787.<sup>20</sup> In the last thirty years of this unfortunate life he managed to translate nine dialogues, only three of which had been previously done in English. Beginning in 1759 with *A synopsis or general view of the works of Plato*, in which he outlined his conception of the dialogues and proposed to publish translations of all by subscription, Sydenham put forth from time to time until 1780 the *Ion*, *Hippias major*, *Hippias minor*, *Symposium*, *Lovers*, *Meno*, *First and Second Alcibiades*, and *Philebus*. From the start he was recognized as an able scholar, and the reviews supported his efforts even though they realized the limitations of public interest in his work. The *Monthly review* praised his ability and diligence, although disliking some of the dialogues themselves;<sup>21</sup> but it regretted that he was expending his talents "on subjects not likely to engage that general attention

<sup>16</sup> *Monthly review*, XXIII (1760), 349-53.

<sup>17</sup> See W. P. Jones, *Thomas Gray, scholar* (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), pp. 66-69.

<sup>18</sup> Printed in *The works of Thomas Gray*, ed. T. J. Mathias (London, 1814).

<sup>19</sup> Norton Nicholls, "Reminiscences of Gray," *Correspondence of Thomas Gray*, ed. P. Toynbee and L. Whibley (Oxford, 1935), III, 1295.

<sup>20</sup> J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses, 1715-1886* (London, 1888); *Gentleman's magazine*, LVII (1787), 366.

<sup>21</sup> *Monthly review*, XX (1759), 284-88, 582-83; XXI (1759), 425; XXV (1761), 271.

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which is due to his merit."<sup>22</sup> The public, as the *Review* says, found Plato "unfashionable." In 1767 the *Review* spoke of its "mortification" that "a work of such literary consequence as the translation and illustration of Plato must lie unexecuted for want of pecuniary encouragement"; for, as the *Review* charged, subscribers had withheld payment for their books.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, at the expense of booksellers and Sydenham himself, the translations continued to come out, not only separately but also bound in a set of four volumes. Probably the total number of copies was rather small, but they added materially to the number of translations available in English.

A friend of Sydenham's last years, Thomas Taylor, finally carried the work of translating Plato to its completion. Born in 1758, Taylor lived until 1835, publishing an enormous quantity of translations and studies of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and other Platonists.<sup>24</sup> His translations of Plato, however, were done in the earlier years of his interesting life. He did the *Phaedrus* in 1792, the *Cratylus*, *Phaedo*, *Parmenides*, and *Timaeus* in 1793; then, revising the nine translations by Sydenham and one of the *Republic* by Spens, he completed in 1798 *The works of Plato*, published in 1804 in five handsome folios. A self-trained scholar and not the equal of Sydenham, Taylor produced mediocre work; yet he was devoted to his task, and through him England was the first modern nation, except Italy, to have a complete translation of Plato in its own tongue.

The activity in Platonic scholarship which culminated in Taylor's work must have both responded to and stimulated

an interest in Plato. How large that interest was it is hard to tell, for the direct influence of Plato was, after all, not great during the eighteenth century. At Cambridge, for example, he was generally neglected,<sup>25</sup> though the *Laws* and some other dialogues were recommended "outside reading."<sup>26</sup> Oxford men seem to have read only Forster's edition of five dialogues.<sup>27</sup> But there must have been readers of the other editions and translations which appeared. Berkeley, for instance, read *The works of Plato abridg'd*,<sup>28</sup> Wordsworth and Shelley each owned a copy of Taylor's volume of 1793, and Wordsworth had Forster's edition.<sup>29</sup> Shelley, moreover, had also *The works of Plato abridg'd*, the complete Bipont edition, and some translations by Sydenham.<sup>30</sup>

It is difficult, of course, to discover much more about readers of Plato at this time; but there is evidence enough in the number of publications alone to give us a new conception of the Platonic tradition in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. We must conclude, first, that the eighteenth century continued to edit, translate, study, and read Plato, even though his direct influence on literature had waned. In the second place, we must conclude that just as a period of scholarship often precedes an age of literary creation, so the foundations of Romantic Platonism were laid by scholars of the eighteenth century.

<sup>22</sup> See Gray's comment, *Correspondence*, III, 1295.

<sup>23</sup> C. Wordsworth, *Scholae academicae* (Cambridge, 1877), pp. 131, 337.

<sup>24</sup> Quiller-Couch, p. 137.

<sup>25</sup> Berkeley and Percival correspondence, ed. B. Rand (Cambridge, 1914), p. 64.

<sup>26</sup> *Transactions of the Wordsworth Society*, Vol. VI (1881), items 408 and 409 of the "Sale catalogue of the library at Rydal Mount"; *The Shelley correspondence in the Bodleian Library*, ed. R. H. Hill (Oxford, 1926), p. 47.

<sup>27</sup> T. J. Hogg, *Life of Shelley* (London, 1858), I, 192.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, XXVI (1762), 196.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, XXXVI (1767), 422-23.

<sup>30</sup> See F. B. Evans, "Thomas Taylor, Platonist of the Romantic period," *PMLA*, LV (1940), 1060-79.

A LIST OF THE EDITIONS AND ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF  
PLATO FROM 1670 TO 1804

The chronological limits of the following list are based on the considerations that, first, 1670 marks the end of a period of about fifty years when activity in Platonic scholarship had ceased almost entirely; second, 1804 is the date of the first complete English translation. No attempt has been made to give a formal bibliography, but it is believed that all editions and English translations published within these dates have been recorded in such a way that one may discover exactly what dialogues were published and at what date. The list is founded upon the catalogues of the British Museum, the Bibliothèque nationale, the Library of Congress, and the University of Chicago Library; upon the preface in J. F. Fischer's *Platonis Euthyphro, Apologia Socratis, Crito, Phaedo* (Leipzig, 1759) and F. M. K. Foster's *English translations from the Greek* (New York, 1918); and upon examination of copies in the libraries of Harvard and Princeton universities and in the Howard Memorial Library, New Orleans, Louisiana. The authority in each instance and the location of the most accessible copies are noted according to the following abbreviations:

- BM British Museum  
BN Bibliothèque nationale  
LC Library of Congress  
UCL University of Chicago Library  
HUL Harvard University Library  
PUL Princeton University Library  
HML Howard Memorial Library  
Fischer J. F. Fischer, *op. cit.*  
Foster F. M. K. Foster, *op. cit.*

- 1670 *Platonis Timaeus Loerus de anima mundi*. Cambridge, 1670. [The abridgment of the *Timaeus*, in Greek and Latin, edited by Thomas Gale.] *BN*
- 1673 *Platonis de Rebus divinis dialogi selecti*. Cambridge, 1673. [*Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Laws X, Second Alcibiades*, and five spurious dialogues, in Greek and Latin, edited by John North.] *HUL*  
———. Second edition. Cambridge, 1683. *BM, BN*
- 1675 *Plato his Apology of Socrates, and Phaedo*. London, 1675. *LC, PUL*
- 1696 *Orationes duae funebres*. Cambridge, 1696. [*Menexenus* and an oration of Lysias, in Greek and Latin, edited by M. Busted.] *BM*
- 1701 *The works of Plato abridg'd*. London, 1701. [*First and Second Alcibiades, Theages, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Laches, Protagoras, and Lovers*, in two volumes, translated from the French of André Dacier.] *UCL*  
———. London, 1719–20. *BM, BN, HML*  
———. London, 1739. *Foster*  
———. London, 1749. *LC*  
———. London, 1761. *Foster*  
———. London, 1772. *BM*
- 1711 [Four epistles of Plato.] Leipzig, 1711. *Fischer*  
*Platonis et Xenophontis Convivia*. Oxford, [1711]. [*Symposium*, with similar pieces by Xenophon, Plutarch, and Lucan, in Greek and Latin, edited by H. Aldrich.] *BM*
- 1713 *Platonis de Republica*. Cambridge, 1713. [Greek and Latin, in two volumes, edited by Edmund Massey.] *HUL, PUL*  
*Plato's Dialogue of the immortality of the soul*. London, 1713. [*Phaedo*, translated by Lewis Theobald.] *HUL*
- 1716 [Timaeus.] Hamburg, 1716. [Greek, with Latin translation by Chalcidius.] *Fischer*
- 1728 *Parmenides*. Oxford, 1728. [Greek and Latin, edited by J. W. Thomson.] *Personal copy*
- 1730 *Phaedon: or, a dialogue of the immortality of the soul. Crito: or, Of what we ought to do*. London, [1730?] *BM*  
———. London, 1777. *LC*



- 1738 Platonis Septem selecti dialogi. Dublin, 1738. [*Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*, *Theages*, *Lovers*, *Theaetetus*, in Greek and Latin.] *BM*, *BN*
- 1739 [Apology.] Hamburg, 1739. [Greek and Latin, edited by J. S. Müller.] *Fischer*
- 1744 Platonis Phaedo. Leipzig, 1744. [Greek and Latin, edited by J. H. Winckler.] *Fischer*
- 1745 Platonis Dialogi V. Oxford, 1745. [*Lovers*, *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*, in Greek and Latin, edited by N. Foster.] *HUL*
- . Oxford, 1752. *BN*
- . Oxford, 1765. *BN*, *HUL*, *PUL*
- . Oxford, 1800. *BM*
- 1746 Menexenus. Oxford, 1746. [Greek, in *Funeral eulogies upon military men*, edited by Edward Bentham.] *BM*
- . Oxford, 1768. *HUL*
- . Oxford, [1780?] *BM*
- . Oxford, 1798. *BM*
- 1749 Menexenus, a dialogue of Plato. London, 1749. [Translated by Gilbert West in his *The odes of Pindar*.] *BM*, *PUL*
- . London, 1753. *Foster*
- . London, 1759. *BM*
- 1758 Axiochus. Leipzig, 1758. [Greek and Latin, edited by J. F. Fischer.] *BM*
- 1759 Platonis Euthyphro, Apologia Socratis, Crito, Phaedo. Leipzig, 1759. [Greek, in two volumes, edited by J. F. Fischer.] *BM*
- . Leipzig, 1770. *BM*
- . Leipzig, 1783. *PUL*
- Two orations in praise of the Athenians. [N.p.], 1759. [*Menexenus* (?) and (?).] *Foster*
- The greater Hippias, a dialogue of Plato concerning the beautiful. London, 1759. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- Io, a dialogue of Plato, concerning poetry. London, 1759. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- . Second edition. London, 1768. *HUL*
- 1761 The banquet, a dialogue of Plato concerning love. London, 1761. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- The lesser Hippias, a dialogue of Plato concerning voluntary and involuntary error. London, 1761. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- 1763 The Republic of Plato. Glasgow, 1763. [Translated by H. Spens.] *PUL*, *LC*
- Plato's Phaedon. [N.p.], 1763. *Foster*
- 1769 Meno, a dialogue concerning virtue. London, 1769. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- 1770 Platonis Cratylus et Theaetetus. Leipzig, 1770. [Greek, edited by J. F. Fischer.] *HUL*
- 1771 Platonis Dialogi III. Oxford, 1771. [*First and Second Alcibiades* and *Hipparchus*, in Greek and Latin, edited by William Etwall.] *HUL*
- 1773 The rivals [*Lovers*], a dialogue concerning philosophy. Meno, a dialogue concerning virtue. The first Alcibiades, a dialogue concerning the nature of man. London, 1773. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- 1774 Platonis Sophista, Politicus, Parmenides. Leipzig, 1774. [Greek, edited by J. F. Fischer.] *BM*
- 1775 Plato's Apology of Socrates. Cambridge, 1775. [Translated by J. Mills.] *BM*
- 1776 Platonis Philebus et Symposium. Leipzig, 1776. [Greek, edited by J. F. Fischer.] *BN*
- The second Alcibiades, a dialogue concerning prayer. London, [1776?] [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- 1779 Platonis Euthyphro, Apologia Socratis, Crito, Phaedo, Cratylus, Theaetetus, Sophista, Politicus, Parmenides, Philebus, and Symposium. Leipzig, 1779. [Greek, in four volumes, edited by J. F. Fischer.] *BM*

- Philebus, a dialogue concerning the chief good of man. The first part. London, 1779. [Translated by Floyer Sydenham.] *HUL*
- . The second part. London, 1780. *HUL*
- 1780 Platonis Dialogi IV. Berlin, 1780. [*Meno, Crito, First and Second Alcibiades*, edited by Johann Erich Biester.] *BN*
- . Berlin, 1790. *BM*
- 1781 Platonis quae exstant. Zweibrücken, 1781–87. [The complete works of Plato, in Greek and Latin, edited by F. C. Exter and J. V. Embser in ten volumes for the Bipont Society.] *PUL*
- 1782 Platonis Io. Hamburg, [1782.] [Greek and Latin, edited by M. G. Muller.] *BM*
- Platonis Menexenus. Leipzig, 1782. [Edited by J. C. Gottleber.] *BM*
- Symposium. Leipzig, 1782. [Edited by F. A. Wolf.] *HUL*
- 1784 Platonis Dialogi IV. Vienna, 1784. [*Meno, First Alcibiades, Phaedo*, and *Phaedrus*, in Greek.] *BN*
- Platonis Euthydemus et Gorgias. Oxford, 1784. [Greek and Latin, edited by M. J. Routh.] *PUL*
- 1792 The Phaedrus of Plato; a dialogue concerning beauty and love. London, 1792. [Translated by Thomas Taylor.] *HUL*
- 1793 The Cratylus, Phaedo, Parmenides, and Timaeus of Plato. London, 1793. [Translated by Thomas Taylor.] *PUL*
- 1796 Platonis Alcibiades I et II. Leipzig, 1796. [Greek and Latin, edited by C. Nurnberger.] *BM*
- Platonis Gorgias. Gotha, 1796. [Greek, edited by J. G. Haas.] *BM*
- 1802 Platonis Diaologi selecti. Berlin, 1802–10. [Edited by Ludwig Fr. Heindorf.] *Fischer*
- 1804 The works of Plato. London, 1804. [The complete works, translated by Floyer Sydenham and Thomas Taylor, in five volumes.] *HUL, PUL*

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## THE COLERIDGES, DR. PRATI, AND VICO

M. H. FISCH

THE purpose of this essay is to republish a Coleridge letter which has so far escaped the notice of scholars and to trace a part of the sequel to its postscript. The letter was addressed to Dr. Gioacchino de' Prati, an Italian patriot and conspirator who lived in England from 1823 to 1852.<sup>1</sup> Though Prati is ignored by recent writers on the Italian exiles in England,<sup>2</sup> his very full and lively autobiography was written in English and published by instalments in a London weekly, the *Penny satirist*.<sup>3</sup> In the in-

stalment for October 6, 1838, the letter in question was "printed from the autograph."<sup>4</sup> It reads as follows:

MY DEAR SIR,—For as we both speak from the heart, we will both in our occasional epistolary intercommunion employ the most suitable vehicle for its utterance, our mother tongue.—If ever in my life I wished to be a man of fortune, if ever I was out of humour, and malcontent with my poverty, and with the dispensations of Providence, which has made it my fate to live (in our idiomatic phrase) 'from hand to mouth,' or to quote my own words from a poem published in 1795, or 1799, and which are as true now as when first written,

<sup>1</sup> Two later letters to Prati are printed in *Unpublished letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. E. L. Griggs (1932), II, 373, 451.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Margaret C. W. Wicks, *The Italian exiles in London, 1816-1848* (1937); Harry W. Rudman, *Italian nationalism and English letters* (1940).

<sup>3</sup> Prati was born near Trent in 1790 and educated at Salzburg, Innsbruck, Vienna, Landshut, and Pavia. Though better trained in medicine, he took his law degree at Pavia in 1810. While continuing his studies at Milan, he became a Freemason and Carbonaro. After practicing law at Brescia and Trent, he fled in 1816 to Switzerland, where he lived chiefly at Chur and Yverdon and continued his revolutionary activities until 1823, when he sought asylum in England. There he met Foscolo and other exiles and was befriended by Bowring, Thomas Campbell, Major Cartwright, Sir James Stuart, the Rev. and Mrs. Henry Woodcock, E. C. Hawtrey, and Edward Coleridge. Prati's first visit to Highgate seems to have been made late in May, 1824, in the company of Stuart and the Woodcocks. Edward Coleridge planned at least once to accompany him there (if, as I think, *Unpublished letters*, II, 339, refers to Prati) and may have done so on other occasions. Prati eked out a living by tutoring in German, took part in various unsuccessful educational ventures, and published brochures on the theory and practice of education and on methods of language instruction (see British Museum Catalogue). Through Coleridge he met Joseph Henry Green, under whose guidance he mastered the standard English medical and pharmaceutical treatises while in prison for debt in 1829. After his release, he spent some time in Brussels with his old friend, Buonarroti, who had recently published his history of the conspiracy of Babeuf. He returned to England but recrossed to France after the July Revolution of 1830 and joined the Society of Friends of the People. He returned to England again in 1831, this time as a Saint-Simonian lay preacher. From then

on he earned his living chiefly by the practice of medicine. From 1837 to 1846 he contributed a column of medical advice to the *Penny satirist*, a radical weekly supposed to have been subsidized by the Anti-Corn-Law League, in which his autobiography appeared in instalments from 1837 to 1840. After repeated application to the Austrian authorities, he was repatriated in 1852 and died in 1863 at Brescia. His son Luigi, shortly before his death in 1920, informed Pietro Pedrotti of his father's collaboration on the *Penny satirist*, and Pedrotti employed Miss Constance H. Withe to examine the files in the British Museum. Her abstract and partial transcript of the autobiography was translated by Pedrotti and published with a great deal of supplementary material under the title, *Note autobiografiche del cospiratore trentino Gioacchino Prati, con annotazioni e commenti di Pietro Pedrotti, sulla base di documenti inediti d'archivio* (Rovereto, 1926). See also "Carteggio del cospiratore trentino Gioacchino Prati con Antonio Rosmini," *Archivio Veneto-Tridentino*, VI (1924), 221-62. Michael Mayr (*Der italienische Irredentismus* [2d ed.; Innsbruck, 1917], pp. 48, 60-67, 234) calls Prati "the most dangerous Irredentist of Southern Tirol," "one of the most dangerous innate revolutionists of the time." I have not seen Luigi Rava, "Gioacchino de' Prati patriota e cospiratore trentino," *Il nuovo patto*, Vol. IV (1921), Nos. 3 and 4. Of the *Penny satirist* and other publications of its class, the most interesting contemporary account is "Half-a-crown's worth of cheap knowledge," *Fraser's magazine*, XVII (1838), 279-90, by William Makepeace Thackeray (cf. *Athenaeum*, March 19, 1887, p. 383). See also Thomas Frost, *Forty years' recollections* (London, 1880), pp. 83 f.; H. R. Fox Bourne, *English newspapers* (1887), II, 115 f.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. II, No. 77, p. 2, col. 1.

I partaking of the evil thing,  
With daily prayers and daily toil,  
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,—&c.,<sup>5</sup>

it has been since I became acquainted with you. But I am in my own country; I have many sworn friends; and I have some influence, and though (I dare affirm) disproportionate to what it ought to be, at which you will not wonder when you know that during five and twenty, I might say thirty years, I have been resolutely opposing the whole system of modern illumination, in all its forms of Jacobinism, and Legitimatism, Epicurean (in our country Pelagian) Christianity, Pelagian morals, Pelagian politics, and 'casting my bread on the waters,' yet, 'after many days,' I have begun to find it, and therefore, I may venture to add that I have a growing influence. Now be assured, that whatever I could do for a brother, I will do for you. Nothing shall be lost for want of *effort* on my part. But some time must elapse before I can have talked, consulted, and written to my friends, though I hope *shortly* to be able to send you some present and temporary assistance. I shall read with great interest the works you have sent me, and as soon as my *Aids to Reflection* have left the printer's office in the shape of a volume, I will send you all such of my works as are not out of print.

I now write for no other purpose but that dictated by the belief that it will be a comfort to you to be re-assured that you possess one most sincere well-wisher and sympathising friend in

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Grove, Highgate, May 14, 1825.

P.S.—I am more and more delighted with G. B. Vico, and if I had (which thank God's good grace I have not) the least drop of *Author's* blood in my veins,<sup>6</sup> I should twenty

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Poems* (Oxford ed.), p. 168 ("Ode to the departing year," 1796, ll. 154 ff.):

"I unpartaking of the evil thing,  
With daily prayer and daily toil  
Soliciting for food my scanty soil, . . ."

<sup>6</sup> In a letter to his nephew, John Taylor (later Justice) Coleridge, April 8, 1825, Coleridge speaks of himself as "a predestined author, though without a drop of true *author* blood in my veins" (*Letters* [1895], II, 737).

times successively in the perusal of the first volume (I have not yet begun the second) have exclaimed: '*Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt.*' By the bye, when I see you on Thursday I will mention a set of articles, on which I myself for a long time had set my thoughts, a critical and biographical account of the great *revolutionists* in the intellectual world, philosophical and religious. I am pretty certain that I could dispose of them, so as to make it worth your while, and at more than a common bookseller's honorarium, to the *Quarterly Review*,<sup>7</sup> and other works of extensive sale, and which would not at all prevent your afterwards collecting and publishing them in a volume. God bless you! mention my name with all respectful kindness to Mrs. ———.<sup>8</sup>

Prati's visits to Highgate had begun nearly a year before and "were repeated at least once a week for two years running," usually at the famous Thursday evenings, but sometimes for private conversations. They had much in common. Prati, like Coleridge, had been deep in Boehme, Bruno, Spinoza, and Schelling. He attributed his intellectual awakening to his boyhood reading of Lessing's *On the education of the human race* and was glad to renew the memory by borrowing volumes from a set of Lessing's works in Coleridge's possession. He was personally acquainted with Jacobi, Schelling, Friedrich Schlegel, Ritter, and Oken. He had spent a week in Mesmer's home and was able to supply Coleridge with eyewitness accounts of "Zoo-magnetism," as well as to discuss it from the medical point of view.<sup>9</sup> He had taught for a time in

<sup>7</sup> J. T. Coleridge had recently succeeded Gifford as editor of the *Quarterly*, and he subsequently engaged Prati to write for it, but at the end of the year he resigned and was succeeded by Lockhart before Prati had anything ready.

<sup>8</sup> Presumably Mrs. Prati; more precisely, Giuseppina Maffei, the unwedded companion of his exile. It was not until January 6, 1844, that Prati signed his name to his column, "The medical adviser."

<sup>9</sup> Marginalia quoted in *Table talk*, last note under date of April 30, 1830.

Pestalozzi's school at Yverdon. He had published a life of Dante and projected an edition of his works. He was an intimate friend of the Swiss philologist, J. K. Orelli, who had been the first to call attention to Vico's anticipations of Niebuhr.<sup>10</sup>

Students of Vico and of Coleridge would alike be glad to know what ideas of his own Coleridge found already expressed by Vico a century before him. If the set of the *Scienza nuova* he borrowed from Prati is ever discovered, the question may be answered by Coleridge's marginalia. It was a set of the sixth edition, in three volumes, published at Milan in 1816; and any reader who possesses or has access to a copy is urged to examine it for evidence of its having passed through Prati's or Coleridge's hands. In the meantime, the present essay will confine itself to tracing the further story of Coleridge's interest in Vico and its reflection in those who came under his influence.

To a certain extent it is possible to follow Coleridge through the three volumes of the *New science*. He began with Vico's autobiography, which was included in the first volume in place of an introduction. His own *Aids to reflection* was passing through the press at the time, and for the verso of the table-of-contents page he chose this motto to pair with one from Marinus' life of Proclus.

Omnis divinae atque humanae eruditionis elementa tria, NOSSE, VELLE, POSSE: quorum principium unum MENS, sive SPIRITUS; cujus Oculi est RATIO; cui lumen praebebat DEUS.—*Vita di G. B. Vico*, p. 50.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> "Vico and Niebuhr," *Schweizerisches Museum*, I (1816), 184 ff.

<sup>11</sup> This identifies the edition of the *Scienza nuova* used by Coleridge as the sixth, since there was no other printing of the autobiography before 1825 in which this sentence occurred on p. 50. As usual, Coleridge quotes freely. The capitals and italics are his, "sive spiritus" is not in the original, and there the last clause reads: "cui aeterni veri lumen praebebat Deus."

A week or so later he had got as far as Vico's axioms on the origins of language in the second section of the first book of the *New science*. Returning from a call on his publisher Hessey on May 23, 1825, "much impressed with the light" which Hessey had "flashed" upon his mind with regard to the cure of stammering, one of the very first sentences I met with in Giambattista Vico was the following: "I mutoli mandan fuori i suoni infirmi cantando—e gli scilinguati pur cantando spediscono la lingua a pronunziare!"—i.e. Mutes or Dumb Persons send forth indistinct sounds in a sing-song: and Stammerers by chaunting gradually unloose and accustom or facilitate the tongue to pronounce freely. A curious coincidence—I have myself repeatedly observed that children in being taught to read begin to stutter when you prevent them from singing their words.<sup>12</sup>

By the middle of June he had got to "The discovery of the true Homer" in the third volume. On June 16 Henry Crabb Robinson accompanied Basil Montagu and Edward Irving to Highgate.

Dr. Prati came in, and Coleridge treated him with marked attention. Indeed Prati talked better than I ever heard him. One sentence (Coleridge having appealed to him) deserves repetition: "I think the old Pantheism of Spinoza far better than modern Deism, which is but the hypocrisy of Materialism"—in which there is an actual sense and I believe truth. Coleridge referred to an Italian Vico who is said to have anticipated Wolf's theory concerning Homer (which Coleridge says was his at college). Vico wrote *Sur une nouvelle Science*, viz. Comparative History. Goethe notices him in his *Life* as an original thinker and great man.

Coleridge also drew a parallel between the condition of the plebs at Rome as represented in the second volume and that of the Negroes under the West India planters. The comparison may well have

<sup>12</sup> *Unpublished letters*, II, 352.



been prompted by letters from his nephew, Henry Nelson Coleridge (already secretly engaged to his daughter Sara), who was at that time in the West Indies as secretary to William Hart Coleridge, first bishop of Barbados, another of his nephews.<sup>13</sup>

It was in that year that Montagu began bringing out his edition of Bacon, and sometime in the summer Coleridge was engaged to translate the *Novum organum*. He planned to begin work during his annual sojourn at Ramsgate in October and November. He had, of course, been struck by Vico's admiration of Bacon, so congenial to his own reverence for "the English Plato," and also by the numerous parallels between Bacon's aphorisms in the *Novum organum* and Vico's in the *New science*. These were obvious materials for his introduction and notes, and he therefore intended to take with him to Ramsgate the set of Vico which Prati had lent him. But, as he wrote back to Gillman after arriving,

in my hurry, I scrambled up the Blackwood instead of a volume of Giovanni Battista Vico, which I left on the table in my room, and forgot my sponge and sponge-bag of oiled silk. But perhaps when I sit down to work, I may have to request something to be sent, which may come with them. I therefore defer it till then. . . .

Unfortunately, if he ever began the translation, he did not finish it, and Montagu was obliged to secure the services of his friend, William Wood.<sup>14</sup>

On May 8, 1826, Coleridge was again urging upon Prati "a series of Critical and biographical Sketches of the most remarkable revolutionary minds"; but now, instead of the biographies of Bruno and

Cornelius Agrippa which he had first proposed, he suggested that Prati begin with "a spirited Sketch of Vico's Life and great Work," which "would be more attractive to the Learned Public, and easy and *readier* to yourself"; and he offered to assist Prati with his English. Prati, however, had made the mistake of composing a life of Schiller, for which, after Carlyle's, there was no market.<sup>15</sup> Discouraged by that failure, he seems never to have attempted the Vico. (It is worth noting that the project later suggested itself to a greater exile: Mazzini in 1839 wrote from London to his friend Ugioni that if he had Ferrari's edition of Vico at hand he would attempt an article in the *British and foreign review* on the doctrines of Vico, "unknown or misunderstood here."<sup>16</sup>)

In August, 1826, a friend in Yverdon transmitted to Prati's sister in Tenno the message that her brother, wearied at last of his restless life of revolutionary activity, had gone to London, where he had found peace and welcome, had been received like a son by the famous poet Coleridge, and intended thenceforth to devote himself to historical studies of the famous men of England.<sup>17</sup>

On April 22, 1828, James Fenimore Cooper and Sir Walter Scott recorded in their journals a large dinner party at Sotheby's. Sir Walter sat opposite Cooper, who had Coleridge at his left. Lockhart was present, and also Sir Walter's friend, Morritt, who had surveyed the scene of the *Iliad*. After the ladies had retired, Coleridge discoursed for more than an hour on his Vichian Homeric theory, with occasional interruptions by Morritt and by Sotheby, who was translating the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and

<sup>13</sup> Henry Crabb Robinson on books and their writers, ed. Edith J. Morley (1938), I, 320 f.; cf. p. 310, from which it appears that Robinson knew Prati before July 1, 1824. Goethe's famous passage on Vico is in his *Italienische Reise* under date of March 5, 1787.

<sup>14</sup> *Unpublished letters*, II, 362; *Letters*, II, 744.

<sup>15</sup> *Unpublished letters*, II, 373 f.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Croce in *La Critica*, XVIII (1920), 230.

<sup>17</sup> Mayr, *Der italienische Irredentismus* (1917), p. 65.

believed, like Morritt, in their unity and single authorship.<sup>18</sup>

The paradoxes to which they objected were repeated on later occasions. On May 12, 1830, Coleridge said: "I have no doubt whatever that *Homer* is a mere concrete name for the rhapsodies of the *Iliad*. Of course there was a *Homer*, and twenty besides." And on July 9, 1832: "I have the firmest conviction that *Homer* is a mere traditional synonyme with, or figure for, the *Iliad*." His nephew (by this time also his son-in-law), who reports these sayings in his *Specimens of the table talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, tells us in a note to the former that

Mr. Coleridge was a decided Wolfian in the Homeric question; but he had never read a word of the famous Prolegomena, and knew nothing of Wolf's reasoning, but what I told him of it in conversation. Mr. C. informed me, that he adopted the conclusion contained in the text upon the first perusal of Vico's *Scienza Nuova*; "not," he said, "that Vico had reasoned it out with such learning and accuracy as you report of Wolf, but Vico struck out all the leading hints, and I soon filled up the rest out of my own head."<sup>19</sup>

In the meantime, the reporter of the *Table talk* had himself published in 1830 the first of a projected series of *Introductions to the study of the Greek poets*. This volume was largely devoted to *Homer* and briefly noticed the Homeric question but without naming Vico or Wolf. Henry Hart Milman made the book the occasion for an extended discussion of the Homeric controversy in the *Quar-*

terly review in the following year. It was doubtless apropos of this book and Milman's review that the remarks in the *Table talk* were made. Milman observed that Vico's "bold and original conceptions on many subjects connected with the history of mankind are now emerging into light," and his *New science*, "coinciding in a remarkable manner with the tone of thinking prevalent among the continental writers of the present day, many of whose speculations it had anticipated, is acquiring a tardy fame, and winning its way to something like an European reputation."<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps the chief contributor to that reputation was the French historian, Michelet, who had published in 1827 an abridged translation (or rather paraphrase) of the *New science*, under the title *Principes de la philosophie de l'histoire*, and a brilliant sketch of Vico's life and work in the *Biographie universelle*, at the end of which he had remarked that "no English or Scottish writer, so far as I know, has mentioned Vico." As if to make good the deficiency, the *Foreign review* published in 1830 a review article on Vico, dwelling on his anticipations of Wolf and Niebuhr and showing that on some points of difference the subsequent discovery of Cicero's *De republica* had vindicated Vico. In the same year Thomas Arnold published the first volume of his edition of Thucydides with the famous appendix on "The social progress of states," based on Vico's insight that "the old Homeric monarchies were in fact an instance of power depending on blood, and therefore of the ascendancy of nobility."

This ascendancy, enjoyed in the earliest state of society by noble birth, has been traced in various countries, and its phenomena most successfully investigated, by Giovanni Battista Vico, in his *Principi di Scienza nuova*; a

<sup>18</sup> Coleridge the talker, ed. Armour and Howes (1940), pp. 180 ff., 336 f.

<sup>19</sup> It is difficult to reconcile with this statement the one quoted above from Crabb Robinson (to the effect that Coleridge held the theory in question when he was at college) except by supposing that Coleridge read the *New science* at Jesus College, Cambridge, between 1792 and 1794. But I think Crabb Robinson's report is not to be pressed, and I shall give reasons later for believing that Coleridge first read Vico in Prati's copy.

<sup>20</sup> Quarterly review, XLIV (1831), 128 f.

work disfigured indeed by some strange extravagancies, but in its substance so profound and so striking, that the little celebrity which it has obtained out of Italy is one of the most remarkable facts in literary history.

Finally, in 1833, John Kenrick contributed to *The philological museum* of Hare and Thirlwall (the translators of Niebuhr) a long and able article on Vico, calling attention to his anticipations not merely of Wolf and Niebuhr but also of Warburton's exposure of the widespread notion that hieroglyphics were "an invention of the priests or philosophers of Egypt, to conceal a sublime doctrine from the knowledge of the vulgar, or keep them in subjection by maintaining a monopoly of science." Kenrick leaned heavily upon Michelet and observed that "whoever is not in love with difficulty for its own sake, will do well to seek his knowledge of Vico's system in M. Michelet's work; for Vico himself is the Heraclitus of modern philosophers."<sup>21</sup>

Henry Nelson Coleridge had found in Milman's article "a beautiful and cogent argument in favour of the original unity of the Iliad and Odyssey each taken separately,"<sup>22</sup> but at the same time it opened up

<sup>21</sup> *Philological museum*, II (1832-33), 626-44 at 639, 630. Since this was the best English account of Vico prior to Flint's book in 1884, I was at pains to determine its authorship. It was signed "M. C. Y." at the left and "I. K." at the right. But there was no English scholar of the nineteenth century with either set of initials. However, there were two previous articles each signed "M. C. Y." and "J. K."—namely, "On the names of the antehellenic inhabitants of Greece," I (1831-32), 609-27, and "On the kings of Attica before Theseus," II (1832-33), 345-72; in each of which the author speaks in the first person singular. "I. K." was therefore "J. K.," and the only likely "J. K." was John Kenrick, who had studied under Wolf at Berlin and written the article on Niebuhr in the *Westminster review*, XI (1829), 353-88 (cf. George L. Nesbitt, *Benthamite reviewing* [1934], p. 28); and "M. C. Y." was no collaborator but Manchester College, York, where Kenrick was tutor in classics and history from 1810 until 1840, when the College reverted from York to Manchester and Kenrick became professor of history.

<sup>22</sup> *Introductions to the study of the Greek classic poets* (2d ed., 1834), p. 41.

to him the literature of the controversy, from Vico and his predecessors through Wolf to the German critics of the 1820's, and set him to reading Vico in Michelet's translation. He saw the necessity of revising and expanding his own inadequate account of the controversy; and, as if to make amends for his omission of Vico's name from the first edition, he decided for the second to translate into English the third book of the *New science*, "The discovery of the true Homer." The decision was doubtless influenced by the *Foreign review* article, Arnold's appendix, and Kenrick's essay, as well as by Milman's review; but I have no doubt it was also urged by Coleridge himself, who seems to have supervised his study of Vico throughout. On April 23, 1832, he said:

To estimate a man like Vico, or any great man who has made discoveries and committed errors, you ought to say to yourself: 'He did so and so in the year 1720, a Papist, at Naples. Now, what would he not have done if he had lived now, and could have availed himself of all our vast acquisitions in physical science?'

After the *Scienza Nuova*, read Spinoza. . . . They differed—Vico in thinking that society tended to monarchy; Spinoza in thinking it tended to democracy. . . .

And on April 9, 1833:

I have a deep, though paradoxical, conviction that most of the European nations are more or less on their way, unconsciously indeed, to pure monarchy; that is, to a government in which, under circumstances of complicated and subtle control, the reason of the people shall become efficient in the apparent will of the king.

To which his son-in-law added the note: "This is backing Vico against Spinoza."

In June, 1833, Coleridge went to Cambridge with Green and Gillman for the famous meeting of the British Association, and Willmott preserved an exceptionally

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For p. Nelson father-in-law which h. years before he took to prepare had lost his address sense of about the had born Vico. T

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<sup>23</sup> [Robert Coleridge (L. Samuel Taylor Campbell,

<sup>24</sup> *Unpublished view*, XLV <sup>25</sup> John Taylor Coleridge

full record of his talk in Thirlwall's rooms. Thirlwall and Coleridge discussed Homer, Herodotus, and Thucydides among many other writers and matters; and it is not unlikely that they talked over Kenrick's essay on Vico and the proposed translation of the third book.<sup>23</sup>

For purposes of the translation, Henry Nelson Coleridge borrowed from his father-in-law the copy of the original which he had borrowed from Prati eight years before, and in the autumn of 1833 he took it down to Devonshire with him to prepare his second edition. Coleridge had lost touch with Prati during his bedridden years, but on October 29 he found his address in a letter to the *Times* in defense of Buonarroti, and wrote to inquire about the volumes of Lessing which Prati had borrowed shortly after lending him the Vico. This required the confession:

I have (or rather, ought to have) two volumes of your's—Vico's *Nuova Scienza* but unfortunately I had yielded to the request of a friend and relation, to lend them to him—and he is now in Devonshire and will not return till the end of November—but I should be most happy to order another Copy for you, if one can be found in London—or any other work, as a quid pro quo—or if you will let me have your address, to remit the former, as soon as I can recover them.<sup>24</sup>

Coleridge recovered the Lessing,<sup>25</sup> but it is to be feared both that Prati never recovered the Vico and that Henry Nelson Coleridge could have done as well without it, for he says of his translation: "It is not literal; for who can translate this curious writer literally? But, availing myself of M. Michelet's most valuable paraphrase,

I believe I have given the meaning of the original with sufficient accuracy."<sup>26</sup> In any case, his second edition appeared in 1834, adorned with what is still the only consecutive translation of any part of Vico's works into English.

In acknowledging his copy of the first edition, Wordsworth had expressed the view that "the Books of the Iliad were never intended to make one Poem, and that the Odyssey is not the work of the same man or exactly of the same age. . . . As to the merits of the Poetry, it is in my judgment only second to Shakespeare."<sup>27</sup> In 1844, writing to John Kenyon about his friend Elizabeth Barrett's poems, Sara Coleridge deprecated Miss Barrett's summary treatment in her notes of those who believed in the "Homeric speculation." Her censure, she said, "sweeps away, like chaff before the wind, not only . . . men of genius and learning, such as Wolf and Heyne, and the Italian Vico—but those of the highest poetic feeling, who, both in this and other countries, are converts to the system." In 1850 she wrote to her cousin Edward in criticism of an orthodox article on the Homeric controversy in the *Quarterly review*:

While I entertained Wolf's idea of the possibility that the poems were national and the work of a school, as did also Mr. Wordsworth, Southey, and I believe Scott (and they may be supposed to have a poetic intuition), I have always seen unity in the plan of the "Iliad," what seems to me a true Achilleid.<sup>28</sup>

In 1862 Coleridge's disciple, Frederick Denison Maurice, better known for his leadership of Broad-Church thought and Christian Socialism, and as founder of the Working Men's College and of Queen's

<sup>23</sup> [Robert Aris Willmott], *Conversations at Cambridge* (London, 1836), pp. 1–36. E. K. Chambers (*Samuel Taylor Coleridge* [1938], p. 328), following Campbell, mistakenly assigns this book to Le Grice.

<sup>24</sup> *Unpublished letters*, II, 451 ff.; cf. *Quarterly review*, XLV (1831), 167–209, 407–50.

<sup>25</sup> John Louis Haney, *A bibliography of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1903), p. 120, No. 190.

<sup>26</sup> *Introductions* (2d ed.), p. 35 n.

<sup>27</sup> *Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, ed. E. de Selincourt (1939), I, 506.

<sup>28</sup> *Memoir and letters of Sara Coleridge*, edited by her daughter [Edith Coleridge] (New York, 1874), pp. 214, 466.

College for women, published a history of *Moral and metaphysical philosophy*, the first and so far the only English history to give an account of Vico fairly proportioned to that of other philosophers and to place him in the general movement of modern philosophy. This history was first undertaken in 1835 for the *Encyclopaedia metropolitana*, which Coleridge had designed and for which he wrote in 1817 the "Preliminary treatise on method." Maurice's son says that from 1835 onward "this article, as it gradually developed in future editions into his complete treatise on the subject, occupied him, with short intervals, throughout almost his entire life, either in preparation, study, writing or revision."<sup>29</sup> The first and shortest version, which appeared in the 1845 edition of the *Encyclopaedia*, does not include the account of Vico, which made its first appearance in the entirely re-written and separately published edition of Maurice's history in 1862. He explains Vico's isolation and lack of immediate influence by his increasing absorption in an investigation of the common law of nations which had no point of attachment to the practical concerns of his time and place.

His method of pursuing it has made him of immense use to later times. But he had to make great sacrifices, and not only sacrifices of immediate interest and reputation, that he might engage in the pursuit. . . . We should like to hear the voice of the Neapolitan citizen rising above that of the cosmopolite. . . . That he could be what he was without a country; that he could even claim for Italy something of its old right to speak as a witness for all the nations, not for herself specially; should increase the admiration with which we regard him. But we may partly understand why

Montesquieu, who, amidst all his general studies, was essentially the nobleman of the South of France—why Voltaire, who, with all his cosmopolitanism, was the oracle of Paris and the model of its writers, should have necessarily obtained an influence in their day which could not be reached by a more elevated and profound thinker, who only appealed to Europe generally, who spoke of the demands of mankind, without being attached to any definite circle of men.

When Maurice comes to Herder, he is in a position to say:

It will strike our readers that Herder had not quite a right to speak of the road which he proposed to travel as one that had never been travelled before. Vico had surely attempted a philosophy or science of humanity as much as any man in later or older days had attempted a philosophy of nature or of mind. He does not bring to that attempt the information . . . which Herder has amassed. . . . But . . . as a compensation for the encyclopedic knowledge of the German, there is in the Neapolitan a penetration into the meaning of signs and symbols, a critical genius, and a profound reverence for the intuitions of different races, which we cannot think has any parallel in his successor. In our day the influence of Vico has been far more felt by other countries, and we should suppose by Germany, than that of the author of the *Ideas*.

The story we have been telling is at least half of the story of English interest in Vico down to the appearance of Flint's admirable book upon him in 1884, which at last left scholars without excuse for continued ignorance of him.<sup>30</sup> How much of the story is fairly attributable to the accident of Prati's lending Coleridge a copy of the *New science*, it would be venturesome to say; but certainly no inconsiderable part of it.

<sup>29</sup> Frederick Maurice, *Life of Frederick Denison Maurice* (1884), I, 185. When Maurice was editor of the *Athenaeum*, an article was published on "Monti and the Italian writers of the eighteenth century" containing a brief account of Vico in the instalment of October 22, 1828, pp. 825 f.

<sup>30</sup> For the other half, and a general account of Vico's thought and influence, see the introduction to the translation of his autobiography by M. H. Fisch and T. G. Bergin, to be published shortly by the Cornell University Press.

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In conclusion, however, I must refer to one bit of evidence which might be adduced to show that Coleridge was familiar with Vico's writings a decade before he met Prati. This is a passage in his *Hints towards the formation of a more comprehensive theory of life*, which was posthu-

Now it has been shown that Coleridge drew many of his "hints" from Steffens and others, but I think it has not yet been noticed that the Vico passage was lifted, and its context adapted, from Jacobi. I can best exhibit this by printing the two side by side.<sup>32</sup>

JACOBI'S VON DEN GÖTTLICHEN DINGEN AND  
COLERIDGE'S THEORY OF LIFE

Der Kern der Kantischen Philosophie ist die von ihrem tiefdenkenden Urheber zur vollkommensten Evidenz gebrachte Wahrheit: dass wir einen Gegenstand nur in so weit begreifen, als wir ihn in Gedanken vor uns werden zu lassen, ihn im Verstande zu erschaffen vermögen. . . .

Lange vor Kant, zu Anfange des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts schrieb Joh. Bapt. Vico zu Neapel: Geometrica ideo demonstramus, quia facimus; Physica, si demonstrare possemus, faceremus; hinc impiae curiositatis notandi, qui Deum a priori probare student. Metaphysici veri claritas eadem ac lucis, quam non nisi per opaca cognoscimus; nam non lucem, sed lucidas res videmus. Physica sunt opaca, nempe formata et finita, in quibus metaphysici veri lumen videmus.\*

\* Joh. Bapt. a Vico, Neapol. reg. eloq. Professor, de antiquissima Italorum sapientia ex linguae latinae originibus eruenda libri tres. Neap. 1710.

Kästner warf in Eberhards phil. Magazin . . . die Frage auf: Was heisst in der Geometrie möglich? und beantwortet sie mit folgender Wendung.—Euklid würde von Wolfen (der die Möglichkeit des vollkommensten Wesens bewiesen zu haben glaubte) verlangen: Ein vollkommenstes Wesen machen. Nämlich in eben der Bedeutung, in welcher Euklid das Icosaeder macht, im Verstande; nicht ein vollkommenstes Wesen ausser sich schaffen, denn auch das Icosaeder braucht nicht ausser dem Verstande zu seyn.

mously published by Seth B. Watson in 1848. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, in a note dated 1890, says that the manuscript was written at Coleridge's dictation, probably in the autumn of 1816, and in part revised and corrected by him; and I believe this is consistent with all the known facts.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Alice D. Snyder, *Coleridge on logic and learning* (1929), pp. 16 f.

To account for Life is one thing; to explain Life another. . . . To account for a thing is to see into the principle of its possibility, and from that principle to evolve its being. Thus the mathematician demonstrates the truths of geometry by constructing them. It is an admirable remark of Joh. Bapt. a Vico, in a Tract published at Naples, 1710,<sup>1</sup> "Geometrica ideo demonstramus, quia facimus; physica si demonstrare possemus, faceremus. Metaphysici veri claritas eadem ac lucis, quam non nisi per opaca cognoscimus; nam non lucem sed lucidas res videmus. Physica sunt opaca, nempe formata et finita, in quibus Metaphysici veri lumen videmus." The reasoner who assigns structure or organization as the antecedent of Life, who names the former a cause, and the latter its effect, he it is who pretends to account for life. Now Euclid would, with great right, demand of such a philosopher to make Life; in the same sense, I mean, in which Euclid makes an Icosahedron, or a figure of twenty sides, namely, in the understanding or by an intellectual construction:—an argument which, of itself, is sufficient to prove the untenable nature of Materialism.

To explain a power, on the other hand. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Joh. Bapt. a Vico, Neapol. Reg. eloq. Professor, de antiquissima Italorum sapientia ex linguae Latinae originibus eruenda: libri tres. Neap., 1710.

That Coleridge had Jacobi and not Vico open before him is suggested by his adaptation of the Euclid illustration, and proved by the fact that Jacobi's quotation from Vico is really an abridged para-

<sup>32</sup> Jacobi, *Werke*, III (1816), 351 ff. (the edition which Coleridge used and annotated; cf. Haney's *Bibliography*, p. 117, No. 158); Coleridge, *Miscellanies: aesthetic and literary* (1885), pp. 379 f.

phrase,<sup>33</sup> which Coleridge abridges still further. It is impossible, therefore, to use this passage as evidence of firsthand knowledge of Vico. It is quite unlikely, moreover, that Coleridge would have followed Jacobi in using the Latin form of Vico's name if he had already been familiar with his writings.

I conclude, therefore, that Coleridge's direct acquaintance with Vico dates from

the day that Prati lent him the *New science* in 1825. In any case, however, the passage above quoted from the *Theory of life* is the earliest reference to Vico in English literature,<sup>34</sup> if we consider dates of composition rather than dates of publication; and it occurs ninety-one years after the first edition of Vico's major work in 1725.

#### APPENDIX

##### EXTRACTS FROM DR. PRATI'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY RELATING TO S. T. COLERIDGE<sup>35</sup>

It was in the latter end of the month of May, that my friends<sup>36</sup> invited me to an early breakfast, after which, an open carriage drove us from Portland-place . . . [to] that romantic place enclosed with elm-trees, called the Grove; and we alighted at Mr. Gillman's. We were introduced into a beautiful back-parlour, which looked over a nice garden, the walls of which did not prevent the prospect over the estates of Lord M. The host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Gillman, received us with their usual politeness and hospitality. "Mr. Coleridge will be here immediately," said the amiable lady. A few minutes after, the poet made his appearance. I never shall forget the impression which Coleridge made upon me. . . .

As soon as the usual civilities were exchanged, the conversation became very lively, and the venerable poet soon began to pour out one of those torrents of eloquence which carry

away the attention of the listener, and make him forget both time and space. . . .

We did not leave the house without visiting the garden, which was a favourite place of our poet; here he took me under his arm, and we began to converse together in German. Coleridge spoke this language quite correctly, and with a soft Hanoverian accent. German literature stood highly in his favour; this sympathy for the German was only equalled by his aversion for the French. He seemed to take so much interest in me, that he made me promise to be with him the next day an hour or two before the company which was wont to visit him, did assemble. "We shall," said he, "have a private walk here in the garden if the weather be fine, otherwise you will excuse my taking you in my room, which is my place of rest, my study, and my library."

On returning home, Mrs. W., the sister of the noble baronet, who introduced me to C., asked me how I was satisfied with my new acquaintance. "Satisfied," answered I, "I am delighted, enraptured; I find concentrated in him all the talents which I have left with regret on the continent. As a poet, he reminds me of Schiller, as a philosopher, he equals Schelling, and as a speaker, he excels Fichte. As far as I could judge of those different talents combined together, he stands between Goethe and Lessing. I shall see him tomorrow, and I expect a great treat from a private conversation which he promised me."

Accordingly I went, and my visits were repeated at least once a week for two years

<sup>33</sup> For the full text see what is now the standard edition of Vico, *Opere*, I (Bari, 1914), 150.

<sup>34</sup> This statement is based on extensive research, but I make it only in the hope that some reader may be in a position to contradict it.

<sup>35</sup> I know of only two files of the *Penny satirist*: the complete ten volumes in the British Museum and the first two volumes in the Cornell University Library. Coleridge students may therefore welcome the reprinting of a few passages.

<sup>36</sup> Sir James Stuart and the Woodcocks (cf. n. 3 above). Prati gives Woodcock's initial as "E.," which perhaps he had written in his diary for Enrico. He says Mrs. Woodcock was Stuart's sister, but this is a mistake; instead, Stuart's wife was Woodcock's sister. For Stuart see G. E. Cokayne, *Complete baronetage*, IV (Exeter, 1904), 353; for Woodcock see R. A. Austen-Leigh (ed.), *Eton College register, 1763-1790* (Eton, 1921), p. 574.

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running, when by a series of mishaps I was obliged to leave the metropolis.<sup>37</sup>

... His friends assembled at Mr. Gillman's towards tea time, and remained there till late in the evening.

I often spent the morning and afternoon with him, and had the pleasure of conversing with him for whole hours, which I reckon among the most agreeable and instructive ones I ever spent in my life. For he was not only a deep philosopher and poet, but a man possessed of great knowledge in many sciences, and was moreover the most pleasant and humorous companion in the world. No day elapsed in which he did not amuse me with some pleasant anecdote, in which he or some of his friends cut the principal figure.

I will relate one which afforded me great amusement. "At one time," said Coleridge to me, "I was obliged to write now an article, now a squib for a morning paper; for you know as well as I do the saying of the painter in Lessing's 'Emilia Galotti,' 'Die Kunst gehet nach Brot,' Art craves after bread. It happened, that at the same time I had published some work, which was condemned by the public to perpetual oblivion. That vexed me, or as the Germans graphically express it, 'das warnte mich,' which I could not better translate than by periphrasis; it was like wormwood to me. To draw the attention of the public upon this work, I wrote a most pungent squib against its author, viz., against myself. Well, then, so far so good. A few months after, when I was giving my lectures on Shakspeare, a friend of mine wishing to introduce a gentleman of his acquaintance, came to see me, and after some conversation thus addressed me:—'S. C., there is a young gentleman who wishes to make your acquaintance, yet he is afraid to approach you, on account of his being conscious of having given you great offence; but I, knowing you so well, told him that you were not the man to resent any act of petulance or youthful imprudence.' 'But, pray,' asked I,

'my friend, what has the young gentleman done unto me?' 'Well,' replied he, 'you have seen or heard of a most impertinent squib, which appeared against you a few months ago in a morning paper. He is the author of it. But having since heard your lectures, he repents sincerely his foolish rhymes, and begs me to apologize.' I stood amazed. Such a piece of impudence I had never heard before. Yet I did not wish to disgrace him before my friend as a coxcomb, and replied: 'Well, then, you may introduce him to me, and I will say not a word about it.' "

Among the gentlemen and ladies who weekly assembled around Coleridge, were Basil Montagu, his wife, Mrs. Jameson, Mr. Jameson, Lamb, Mr. Joseph Henry Green, his wife, and the Rev. Mr. Irving, the great preacher, and several others, whose names have escaped my memory. Before and during tea, the conversation was promiscuous, but afterwards some subject was introduced, upon which Coleridge expanded himself in a torrent of eloquence. All around him were so taken up with his speech, that seldom a word or a whisper was heard during the whole time he was addressing the company. I remember with delight the instruction and pleasure I derived from these discourses, which cannot be better compared than with the dialogues of Plato. The finest loftiest ideas, pouring forth amidst the most blooming poetical phrases, allegories, and types, now spiced with Socratic irony, now strengthened by close and all-penetrating argumentation, afforded me an intellectual banquet, nowhere to be met either here or in any part of the continent. Goethe and Madame de Stael were perhaps the only ones who could compete with Coleridge in fluency, depth, and originality of conversation. All three are gone. Who shall now dare to assume their station?

Once when walking with him in the garden, we were speaking about the difficulty of translating. "Truly," said he, "no one knows how difficult it is to translate well, but he who has attempted to translate a masterwork. I have done all the justice I could to 'Wallenstein,' but I could not venture upon translating the 'Camp,' which is perhaps the most original part of the work. I would have attempted to

<sup>37</sup> So far from Vol. II, No. 77, Saturday, October 6, 1838, p. 1, col. 4, and p. 2, col. 1. The remainder from No. 78, October 13, 1838, p. 4, col. 1.

translate your favourite 'Faustus,' but I must give it up in despair. To translate it so as to make the English readers acquainted with the plot, is a foolish task. The beauty of this work consists in the fine colour of the style, and in the tints, which are lost to one who is not thoroughly *au fait* with German life, German philosophy, and the whole literature of that country. The antithesis between the slang of Mephistopheles, the over-refined language of Faustus, and the pastoral simplicity of the child of Nature, Margaret, requires a man's whole life to be made self-evident in our language. And therein lies Goethe's peculiarity. I would have wished also to translate some of Goethe's minor poems, which I esteem not only as the best productions of Goethe, but among the best of the modern lyrics. I found equal difficulty. To show how hard it is for one who translates to give the true meaning of his author—take, for instance, our word clever and the German *gemüthlich*. Neither can the German convey, but by periphrasis, ideas which the single word 'clever' signifies, nor [the English] that which the Germans understand under '*gemüthlich*.'

"A clever man is not merely a man of talent—indeed, he may possess but moderate talents, little knowledge, and be clever.

"The clever man is a product of a certain tact acquired by great practice. Yes, talent is a natural gift, cleverness an artificial one. The clever man does not what is the best, but that which is most to the purpose; his actions are

not the offspring of principle, but of circumstances, to which he knows how to accommodate himself. If he is an artist, he produces that which fetches the greatest money; if a politician, he advises that which is most feasible for certain purposes; in morality, in religion, in every thing he is a latitudinarian. In fact, clever men are those which Tacitus calls *callidi temporum et sapientes*. Now, what language can convey the ideas which we associate with the one word 'clever'? and who can translate your '*gemüthlich*'? The very nature of the English, that which we call sterling English, is an antithesis to that which you call *gemüthlich*. In fact, our peculiarity is to be stern or humorous. In the whole gallery of Shakspeare's characters, there is not one trace of '*gemüth*' or '*gemüthlich*.' "

Coleridge, as appears from the letter printed in my last, took the most lively interest in my welfare, and seeing from my conversation that I was deeply engaged in physiological and medical studies, recommended me warmly to Mr. Henry Green of Lincoln's-inn-fields, and I am proud to say, that I have found in him not only the most talented philosopher, eminent physiologist, and well educated gentleman, but a friend, a father, a counsellor, in short, a being to whom I owe not only esteem and gratitude, but filial respect and eternal obligation.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*The forgotten Hume: Le bon David.* By ERNEST CAMPBELL MOSSNER. New York: Columbia University Press, 1943. Pp. xv+251.

Mr. Mossner has undertaken to give us a picture of Hume as a personality set against the background of his literary relations. He maintains, with some reason, that this aspect of Hume is too often ignored and that the philosopher ought to be recognized not only as the great skeptic but also as the benevolent, generous, and patriotic figure that those who knew him acknowledged him to be. Hume lacked a Boswell (in spite of Boswell's real interest in him), and as a result later generations rarely see him as he really was. Dr. Johnson completely fills the scene as the great personality of the period: Mr. Mossner pleads for the anti-Scottish lexicographer's Scottish contemporary and presents the latter both as a more adequate personality and as more representative of the age.

That Hume possessed the qualities Mr. Mossner claims for him—humanity, benevolence, and goodness—seems to be beyond controversy; and, though Mr. Mossner provides us with some new evidence to help corroborate this view of Hume, the evidence, though it is useful to have it, was not necessary to complete the proof. Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk summed the matter up long ago when he wrote in his *Autobiography*: "[Hume] was a man of great knowledge, and of a social and benevolent temper, and truly the best-natured man in the world." Indeed, Carlyle's *Autobiography* and Henry Mackenzie's remarks on Hume in his account of John Home read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1812 together provide a firsthand description of Hume's character which it is difficult for any modern writer to improve upon.

Mr. Mossner's task, however, is less to establish Hume's character than to remind readers of an aspect of it that they tend to ignore and also to illustrate this side of his character with reference to certain of his literary and

personal relations. "The purpose of this book," he tells us in his Foreword, "is to revitalize the most stimulating of modern philosophers by observing him as friend and as foe, as critic and as patron, as man and as Scot." In the Afterword we are told that the broad purpose of the book has been to establish the fact of Hume's humanity, benevolence, and goodness. The second of these tasks is easier than the first and less necessary: the first is much more difficult, for a full account of Hume in his personal, cultural, and national relations demands not only a full knowledge of Hume as man and as thinker but also a close familiarity with the whole texture of eighteenth-century Scottish civilization. For example, Mossner claims Hume as a Scottish patriot and substantiates that claim by giving us an account of his relations with four minor Scottish poets. We are reminded more than once of Hume's desire to assert the superiority of literary works produced in Scotland over contemporary English writing and of the extent to which his Scottish pride sometimes blinded his literary judgment. The conclusion is drawn that Hume was particularly interested in the national pride of Scotland and that this accounted, at least in part, for his championship of native talent whenever he could find it.

There is, of course, some truth in this view, just as it is true that would-be national poets of Scotland such as William Wilkie and John Home were thought of by some at least of the Edinburgh "literati" as objects of national pride and as evidence of a Scottish Golden Age. Titles, so frequently bandied about, such as "the Scottish Pindar" (Dr. Blacklock) and "the Scottish Homer" (Wilkie and Ossian), are also evidence of the existence of a certain kind of national pride which it is clear was not lacking in Hume. Nevertheless, when we find these same patriotic critics frantically exerting themselves to eliminate all "scotticisms" from their writings and eagerly attending lectures on "correct" English pronunciation given by an



Irishman; when we find them ignoring their own literary traditions, despising Scots as a literary medium, advising Burns to write in standard eighteenth-century English versification poems derived from "the heathen mythology," and ignoring the work of Allan Ramsay, Robert Fergusson, David Herd, and others who were interested in the native Scots literary tradition—then we begin to wonder whether the praise of Wilkie, John Home, and Dr. Blacklock is to be attributed to Scottish patriotism or to the desire to avoid like the plague any aspect of Scottish culture that was distinctively Scottish.

The fact is that at the bottom of Hume's whole attitude to Scotland as a cultural center there lay a paradox—a paradox central to the whole of Scottish civilization in the eighteenth century. Mr. Mossner himself quotes a passage from a letter of Hume to Gilbert Elliot of Minto which illustrates the point: "Is it not strange that, at a time when we have lost our Princes, our Parliaments, our independent Government, even the Presence of our chief Nobility, are unhappy, in our Accent and Pronunciation, speak a very corrupt dialect of the Tongue which we make use of; is it not strange, I say, that, in these Circumstances, we shou'd really be the People most distinguish'd for Literature in Europe?" Here we find a Scotsman in the same breath taking pride in the literary eminence which his own people has attained and stigmatizing the traditional written and spoken language of that people as "a very corrupt dialect."

In his discussion of Hume's relation to Scotland and to Scottish culture, Mr. Mossner is faced with the whole complex problem of the attitude of the eighteenth-century Scottish "literati" (as they so liked to call themselves, though Mrs. Baron Mure made a significant comment when she pronounced the word "eaterati") to the national question. Yet he never attacks the problem directly. We are given a careful picture of Hume's relations with minor poets such as Blacklock, Wilkie, and John Home and with the controversial figure of James Macpherson, but this picture, while suggesting that these men received particularly good treatment from Hume because

they were Scotsmen and Hume was anxious to enhance the glory of Scottish letters, does nothing to suggest the ambiguous nature of Hume's patriotism or the anti-Scottish element in the attitude of all the Edinburgh literati.

In James Beattie's privately printed edition of the works of his son, James Hay Beattie (Edinburgh, 1794), he gives us a sketch of his son's life which includes the following statement:

At home, from his Mother and me, he learned to read and write. His pronunciation was not correct, as may well be supposed: but it was deliberate and significant, free from provincial peculiarities, and such as an Englishman would have understood; and afterwards, when he had passed a few summers in England, it became more elegant than what is commonly heard in North Britain. He was early warned against the use of Scotch words and other similar improprieties; and his dislike to them was such, that he soon learned to avoid them; and, after he grew up, could never endure to read what was written in any of the vulgar dialects of Scotland. He looked at Mr. Allan Ramsay's poems, but did not relish them . . . [pp. 13-14].

This passage provides a very good commentary on the attitude of the Scottish literati of the middle and late eighteenth century toward the literary traditions of their own country. The very term "North Britain," with its implicit denial of the separate existence of Scotland, is eloquent—and this in Aberdeen, where non-Gaelic Scottish culture was born.

This is not to say that Mr. Mossner is wrong in attributing Hume's patronage of men like Blacklock, Wilkie, and John Home in part at least to his Scottish patriotism—indeed, we have Hume's own word for this. But it does mean that any adequate assessment of Hume "as Scot" ought to take into consideration Hume's relation not only to the very special and limited kind of patriotism exhibited by the literati but also to those other important aspects of Scottish culture that were flourishing in Hume's Edinburgh. Some recognition at least of the complex nature of the situation is indicated. For there was a threefold picture: there was the native Lowland Scots tradition,

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which had begun to flourish anew ever since the appearance in 1709 of the first volume of James Watson's *Choice collection of comic and serious Scots poems both ancient and modern*, and which was represented equally well by scholarly, creative, and social activities (David Herd, Robert Fergusson, the Cape Club); there was the ancient Gaelic tradition, which was very much alive in the middle of the century, in the poetry of Alexander Macdonald, Duncan Ban Macintyre, Dugald Buchanan, and Rob Donn, and to which Jerome Stone called attention in 1756 by his publication in the *Scots magazine* of the first translation of old Gaelic poetry ever printed; and there was the new eighteenth-century tradition of the Edinburgh literati, which preserved the older Scottish "European" outlook—the ties with France, the metaphysical habit—and thought of Scotland as that part of Britain which could best represent the British Isles in Europe. The literati were anxious to avoid all traces of any characteristically Scottish element in their speech or outlook, for they believed that Scotland would be greater in proportion as her distinguishing features were obliterated.

The literati may have been right or wrong, but the fact remains that they did not represent Scottish culture in their day—they represented only one strand of a threefold culture. It is true that occasionally men like Henry Mackenzie appeared to unite these strands in their own activity, but it was a very superficial unification. The literati accepted Macpherson's Ossian partly out of Scottish patriotism and partly because the view Macpherson presented of a noble and primitive people coincided with the *a priori* conceptions about the nature of such people which their philosophy led them to entertain. (And the reason why Hume was suspicious was just because *his* philosophy justified no such view.) Similarly, Burns was hailed by Henry Mackenzie in 1787 as the "Heav'n taught ploughman" and an illustration of contemporary theories concerning the natural man. The literati were more suspicious of the results of an education from heaven in practice, however, than they were in theory—like the eighteenth-century clergyman mentioned by Mackenzie in his *Anecdotes*

who, crossing the Forth in a storm and being told by the ferryman, in answer to his inquiries if they were in danger, that "we are in the hand of God," replied indignantly, "Man, what kind of a hand is that to be in!"

It is perhaps natural that in Mr. Mossner's book we should hear of the *Scots magazine* but not of Ruddiman's *Weekly magazine*, for Hume read the former and not the latter; it is also natural that we should hear of Macpherson, who faked Gaelic poetry, and not of Jerome Stone, who genuinely translated it, or of Alexander Macdonald, whose poems, published in Edinburgh in 1751, represented the first book in Scottish Gaelic ever printed; nor are we surprised to hear a great deal of the Select Society, where the wits of Edinburgh debated problems in philosophy, and nothing whatever of the Cape Club, where Rab Fergusson and his cronies were singing over their modest ale old Scottish songs that were to quicken the imagination of Burns and produce a great, though short-lived, Scottish revival in the one field in which the literati consistently failed—that of poetry.

This fact helps to explain why Hume and his friends, for all their zeal to promote Scottish literature, always backed the wrong horse. Wilkie's *Epigoniad*, Blacklock's odes, John Home's frigid plays—these were feeble efforts, and today nobody reads them. It never occurred to Hume to write letters to influential friends on behalf of the unfortunate Fergusson and so save a genius for Scotland. The paths of Hume and Fergusson never crossed, for in the field of imaginative literature—the one field in which the native Scots traditions, both Gaelic and non-Gaelic, had everything to offer—the literati were committed to the theory that Scotsmen should produce English literature in Scotland (or in London if they could). This insistence on English diction and deliberate avoidance of a parochial attitude worked excellently in the purely intellectual disciplines, but it was no recipe for producing poetry. Fergusson and Burns achieved what they did by repudiating the poetic tradition of the literati—the poetic tradition for which Hume and his friends stood. (And, if we understand this, we can understand more clearly why

Hume preferred Racine to Shakespeare: he and his friends approached literature from the point of view of those interested only in the rhetorical and intellectual disciplines.)

Mr. Mossner sets up Hume as the antithesis of Johnson, and in a sense this is just. But it is not the opposition between Scot and Englishman: it is the opposition between European and Englishman. Hume was, above all, a good European, while Johnson was essentially a Londoner. And, apart from this difference in cultural context, the similarities between the two (in ideas if not in temperament) are at least as illuminating as the differences. If we want to find the Scottish antithesis to the English Johnson, the most fitting choice would be Robert Fergusson, the only poet in Scotland who had the courage to mock Johnson's style (see his "To Dr. Samuel Johnson: food for a new edition of his Dictionary" and "On Johnson's Dictionary"). Fergusson was consciously opposed to the intellectual world of both the English and the Scottish literati: he attacked both Johnson and Henry Mackenzie (see "The sow of feeling"); and his opposition to Johnson was much more fundamental than Hume's. In discussing the relation of Hume to Scottish culture and to contemporary English culture, Mr. Mossner has oversimplified the pattern of both.

This oversimplification sometimes leads to confusion. In suggesting that Wilkie was hailed by all classes of Scots as a national poet, Mr. Mossner cites Fergusson's "Eclogue to the memory of Dr. William Wilkie." But the implication is misleading to the ordinary reader. Fergusson had been a student of Wilkie's at the University of St. Andrews from 1765 to 1768, when Wilkie was Professor of Natural Philosophy there: he was a particular favorite of the Professor, who took a fatherly interest in the young student, employing him in copying his lectures and acting in the capacity of benevolent protector. Fergusson's tribute was therefore that of a grateful friend and is not to be interpreted seriously as testifying to the younger poet's admiration of the *Epigoniad*. The "Eclogue" itself gives more attention to Wilkie

as a natural scientist than to his poetic achievements.

In short, Hume's attitude to Scottish poetry, with which the first part of Mr. Mossner's study is largely concerned, is not one of simple patriotic support: the situation is much more complicated than this, and the relation of the literati to the cultural traditions of Scotland requires a more careful examination than anyone has yet given it. It is perhaps too much to expect that in a short study of Hume we should be given an inquiry into eighteenth-century Scottish culture that would remedy the defects of existing studies of that subject. On the other hand, Mr. Mossner has set out to present us with the *forgotten* Hume, and the suggestion is that he is remedying the defects of existing portraits. As far as Hume's character goes, Mossner's portrait is the traditional one—one that fits in with all the accounts of those of his contemporaries who really knew him. The most original part of the work is the study of Hume as a patron of Scottish letters and as a Scottish antithesis of Dr. Johnson. Neither of these aspects of Hume can, however, be adequately inquired into without a careful reconsideration of the whole texture of Scottish culture in Hume's day. Mr. Mossner, following the lines laid down by the comprehensive and sympathetic work of Harold William Thompson, oversimplifies many of the issues, just as Mr. Thompson, illuminating and indispensable though his work is, so often did. What is needed is a new history of Scottish literature in the eighteenth century which will draw on less limited data than that on which most existing studies of the subject are based and which will be able to see the literati against a wider and more complex background.

I conclude with a minor query: On what grounds does Mr. Mossner ascribe the "Whaur's your Wullie Shakespeare noo?" story to the *Edinburgh* performance of *Douglas* (p. 44)? It is traditionally ascribed to the London performance of 1757, and certainly the "your Wullie Shakespeare" makes much more sense if the incident occurred in London.

DAVID DAICHES

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Voltaire: *Lettres philosophiques*. Edited by F. A. TAYLOR. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1943. Pp. xxxii+184.

Since the publication of Gustave Lanson's monumental edition of the *Lettres philosophiques* in 1909, with its careful study of the text and its somewhat overcharged commentary, a number of recent investigations have shed new light on Voltaire's visit to England and the significance of the *Lettres philosophiques*. A new edition, utilizing Lanson's text, making a selection from his notes, and adding fresh material, should be of real use to students.

Mr. Taylor follows Lanson in basing his text on the 1734 (Jore) edition, but he modernizes it in accordance with present-day usage. His introduction gives a readable account of Voltaire's residence in England, the necessary facts regarding the publication of the *Lettres*, a brief résumé of Lanson's arguments in support of the Jore text, a lively discussion of the importance of the *Lettres* in the dissemination of English thought in eighteenth-century France, and a select bibliography. An appendix prints a somewhat arbitrary selection of a few variant readings (from Lanson), and there are explanatory notes at the end of the volume.

It cannot be said that Mr. Taylor has taken full advantage of his opportunity to give a simplified and modernized version of Lanson's edition. The introduction, though readable and occasionally witty, depends for its facts largely upon Lanson and J. Churton Collins' now antiquated study,<sup>1</sup> without making use of more recent investigations.<sup>2</sup> Voltaire's letters

are still quoted from the inadequate Moland edition, instead of from the important *Correspondance de Voltaire, 1726-1729*, edited by L. Foulet in 1913. Mr. Taylor, for example, remarks of Voltaire's return to France that "neither the exact date nor the circumstances of his departure from England [are] known" (p. xiv)—a statement which should be compared with Foulet's *Appendice VII*: "Quand Voltaire est-il retourné en France?"<sup>3</sup> Nor are the notes as accurate and helpful as they might be. Mr. Taylor stops to explain who Henri IV (p. 24), Tamerlane (p. 34), and Diogenes (p. 39) were, but on the translator of the *Lettres* (John Lockman, who is accorded an article, with bibliography, in the *DNB*), he remarks: "someone called Lockman, of whom little or nothing is known" (p. xiv). In the notes to a single letter (No. XIX), a handful of errors are apparent, in such easily verifiable matters as the dates of Vanbrugh's birth, of Steele's birth, of Wycherley's death, of Congreve's death, and of the first productions of all of Wycherley's plays (p. 177).

Lanson's edition, in spite of occasional inaccuracies, remains indispensable, even for the beginning student.

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25-61; Norman L. Torrey, "Voltaire's English notebook," *MP*, XXVI (1929), 307-25; and Albert Lantoin, *Les Lettres philosophiques de Voltaire* (Paris, 1931).

<sup>3</sup> Foulet would place the date "vers septembre ou octobre 1728" (p. 278), mainly on the evidence of a letter from the earl of Peterborough to Dr. Richard Towne, dated simply "Nov. the 14th [O.S.]." In dating this letter 1728 rather than 1729 Foulet argues that the references to contemporary events suit 1728 and that Voltaire had no further reason for remaining in England after the publication of the *Henriade*. Unfortunately, no letters of Voltaire are extant between his letter to Thieriot dated "Londres 4 aout [O.S. 1728]," and the mysterious note to the same correspondent in which he announces his coming to Paris "about the fifteenth of March [1729]." Foulet's arguments are admittedly inconclusive but should not be left out of account.

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire, *Montesquieu and Rousseau in England* (London, 1908).

<sup>2</sup> The more important of these are: L. Foulet, "Le Voyage de Voltaire en Angleterre," *RHL*, XIII (1906), 1-25, and "Voltaire en Angleterre," *ibid.*, XV (1908), 119-25; F. Baldensperger, "La Chronologie du séjour de Voltaire en Angleterre et les *Lettres philosophiques*," *Archiv*, CXXX (1913), 137-53, and "Voltaire anglophile avant son séjour d'Angleterre," *RLC*, IX (1929),

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